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THE PEACE IN THE MAKING

H. WILSON HARRIS

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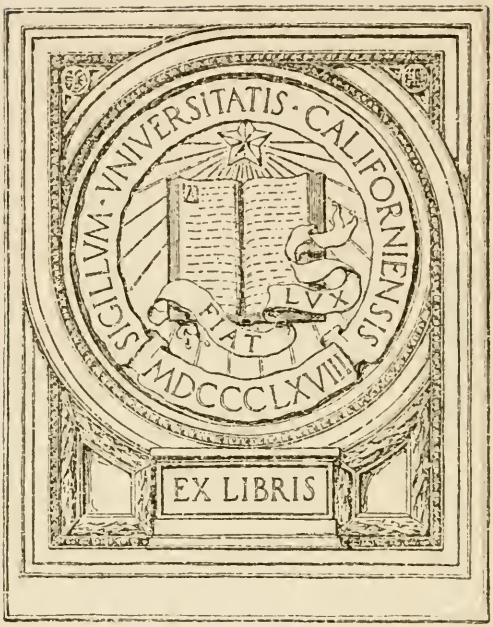
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THE PEACE
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THE PEACE IN THE MAKING

BY

H. WILSON HARRIS

Author of "President Wilson, His Problems and His Policy"

WITH MAPS

NEW YORK

E. P. DUTTON & COMPANY

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HISTORY I

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PREFACE

MY aim in writing this book has been to present something that is a little more than a personal impression, and a good deal less than a considered history, of the Peace Conference. The latter task will be taken in hand in due time by more competent hands than mine, and it will make its appeal to its own special public. What I have endeavoured to produce is an account, checked by such official documents as are available, which will convey to the general reader some not wholly inadequate impression both of what the Conference did and how it did it.

During the three months I spent at Paris as Special Correspondent of the *Daily News* at the Peace Conference I was unexpectedly, as well as undeservedly, fortunate in the contacts various persons intimately concerned in the making of Peace allowed me to establish with them. While there are many conversations that must still remain confidential, enough may be said to convey what is not an entirely external view of the transactions at Paris.

I am greatly indebted to certain personal friends

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with special knowledge who have read different portions of the book and made suggestions of much value regarding it. If I do not mention their names it is because I have no right to associate them with any kind of responsibility for what I have written.

H. W. H.

October, 1919.

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THE PEACE IN THE MAKING

THE PEACE IN THE MAKING

Chapter I

THE ARMISTICE AND AFTER

ON November 11th, 1918, the Armistice between the Allied and Associated Powers on the one hand and the German Government on the other was signed at Marshal Foch's headquarters. Peace had, to all appearance, been restored to the world. It was a sure instinct that impelled London and Paris to spontaneous celebrations unique in their history. The war was over. The bloodshed was ended. The lights could go up. The seas were safe. The principles of Peace had been agreed. All that remained was to work out their application and translate them into the approved phrasing of a diplomatic instrument.

That was the assumption, and a perfectly just assumption. Germany had collapsed swiftly at the end, but the armistice preliminaries had been negotiated in no panic haste. It was as early as October 5th that the first proposal was advanced, and as late as November 11th that the armistice itself was signed. The decisive document, indeed,

was dated six days earlier, November 5th, exactly a month from the day when Prince Max had first addressed himself to President Wilson. That document, a Note handed by Mr. Lansing to the Swiss Minister at Washington for transmission to Germany, embodied the concerted declaration of the Allies as to the Peace they were ready to conclude.

"The Allied Governments," the effective passage ran, "have given careful consideration to the correspondence which has passed between the President of the United States and the German Government. Subject to the qualifications which follow, they declare their readiness to make peace with the Government of Germany on the terms of peace laid down in the President's Address to Congress of January 8th, 1918, and the principles of settlement enunciated in his subsequent Addresses."

The phrasing of the declaration deserves notice: The language is substantially that employed by Prince Max in his original Note of October 5th, and adopted by Dr. Solf in his further Note of a week later, which stated that "the German Government has accepted the terms laid down by President Wilson in his Address of January 8th, and in his subsequent Addresses."

By November 5th, therefore, the ground was cleared. The parties were at one. A series of exploratory and explanatory Notes had passed between Washington and Berlin in the preceding month, and at the end the Allies and Germany

were agreed on the conclusion of a peace based on President Wilson's Address of January 8th—the Fourteen Points speech—and his subsequent Addresses. To put it more briefly, they were agreed on a Fourteen Points peace, subject only to certain definite reservations specified in the Lansing Note of November 5th.

The armistice terms ran to thirty-five clauses. They provided, *inter alia,* for the surrender by Germany of munitions and rolling-stock and warships, for her evacuation of Allied territory and the occupation of her territory by the Allies, for the repatriation of Allied prisoners and the continuance of the Allied blockade. The terms were crushing, but Germany had been warned before she signed that they would be crushing. They were, moreover, armistice terms, not peace terms. Beyond the armistice, which was to run in the first instance for thirty-six days, there lay what the Allies had pledged themselves should be a Fourteen Point peace. With that pledge to justify them before their people the German plenipotentiaries signed.

That first step taken, the question of the second step arose. If the Allies had handled the situation, as it then stood, differently there might have been no Paris Conference at all. Certainly there would have been no sessions of worn-out delegates dragging on into the last days of June. A sound and practical proposal was put forward at the meeting of Allied delegates convoked at Versailles to discuss the armistice conditions. It was

urgent, its principal sponsor contended, that a preliminary peace should be signed at the earliest moment possible. Such a peace could be framed then and there by the delegates already assembled. There could, of course, be no elaboration of details. The task of applying President Wilson's formulæ point by point must necessarily be deferred. But what might be described as a "maximum peace" could be concluded forthwith. Germany, that is to say, could have certain terms both territorial and financial, laid before her, representing the utmost that could be asked of her in the final settlement, though in actual fact the just working-out of the Fourteen Points would almost certainly reduce her liability below that maximum. Such a peace, it was submitted, could be drawn up in a week. Germany in her then temper could be counted on to sign it without cavil. The blockade could be lifted, prisoners could be repatriated, arrested production could be resumed, the peril of Bolshevism in Germany averted, the shadow of famine throughout Europe largely dispelled.

That proposition the Allies as a whole rejected. Mr. Lloyd George was bent on an election that would deprive Great Britain of a Government with power to represent it till late in December. M. Clemenceau had other reasons for desiring postponement. Actually ten fatal weeks were allowed to drift by before the Peace Conference formally opened at Paris.

Chapter II

SETTING THE STAGE

IT was inevitable that the Peace Conference should be held at Paris. Geneva, as a neutral city, was indeed momentarily suggested, but never seriously considered. That the delegates should sit in an Allied capital was taken for granted, and of Allied capitals only two were practically possible. Washington was out of the question on grounds of distance; Brussels, just freed from four years of German occupation, could have neither housed nor fed the delegations; Rome had no claims to put forward comparable to those of London and Paris.

And between London and Paris there was no serious contest. France had, throughout the war, been the warden of the marches. Against the rampart of her trench-scored hills and plains the tide of invasion had surged. She had borne the supreme burden and supported the supreme suffering. Her richest provinces had been scarred and ravaged. It was her greatest soldier who had led the Allies to victory. Paris, moreover, placed as it was on the direct road between Rome and London, had from 1915 been the natural meeting-place for Allied statesmen. All their chief councils had been held there—either in the city itself

or at Versailles—and it was there that the discussions that determined the armistice conditions took place. The war once ended it was to Paris that the Allied sovereigns instinctively repaired. King George and King Albert and King Victor all visited the city in succession in November and December to salute the ransomed Republic, and it was to Paris that President Wilson travelled direct from America.

That the conference should be the Paris Conference, therefore, hardly needed deciding. Yet almost before its members had settled seriously to work it was clear that a worse place for the discussions could hardly have been chosen. The business of the delegates was to apply agreed principles to concrete situations. At the best their task was full of delicacy. They had to decide not merely between conflicting interests, but between interests so nicely poised as to tax the discrimination of the judges to the utmost. But the essential fact was that they were there as judges, not as advocates, and judges not of criminals delivered up for sentence, but of the application of principles to which the formal assent of the Allies should have given compelling force. It was necessary before all things that the temper of the Conference should be dispassionate and judicial. It was necessary before all things that the atmosphere in which the delegates lived and worked should be untainted by influences calculated to stimulate partisanship and deflect justice from its course.

In the fulfilment of those conditions Paris conspicuously failed. Throughout the Conference its atmosphere was charged with over-strained emotions. The city, so far as it could be personified as a whole, was passionate in its nationalism. It was clamorous in its demands for redress, not always distinguishable from revenge. It lapsed unprovoked into suspicions and jealousies. It was agitated to the point of demoralisation by fears for the future.

That is written in no spirit of criticism or reproach. Everything Paris was during the Conference was condoned, and more than condoned, by what she had been through the war. Paris is more than a city. She is the heart of France, far more than London is the heart of England. For four years she had been the nerve-centre of the national resistance. The population of the invaded areas had fled to her for refuge. In 1914, and again four years later, the enemy's guns had reverberated among her houses. Through the last months of the war, the months most recent in memory, shells had fallen day by day and bombs dropped night by night in her streets. What wonder, if after it all, Paris showed some symptoms, as more than one commentator put it, of shell-shock?

But if what Paris was is no reproach to Paris it made the city the worst of all possible settings for such a Conference as the world looked for when the armistice was signed. No feature of Paris justified that criticism more than its Press.

The number of daily papers published in the French capital is astonishing. As purveyors of news they cannot compare, as a whole, with the London Press. As organs of propaganda, run in most cases at a loss by an individual proprietor with strong views or in the interests of some sectional cause, they have no parallel in England. Most of them, moreover, are frankly venal. Within limits their editorial, as well as their advertisement, columns are for sale. They can, to put it rather more delicately, be subsidised for particular purposes.

It is easy to conceive what that meant in a city crowded with delegates of rival nations, each intent on getting public hearings for its individual claims. A plenipotentiary of one not inconsiderate power was declared at a crisis in the Conference to have taxed M. Clemenceau privately with his personal opposition to the expressed will of France on the issue of the moment. "What do you mean by the expressed will of France?" asked the President of the Council. "Look at your Press," answered his critic. "Every paper except *Débats* and *l'Humanité* is supporting our claims." Clemenceau looked straight at his interlocutor and then down at the bureau at which he was sitting. "Do you want me to open that drawer," he said, "and show you the list of the sums you have been paying to the Paris papers?" His visitor decided on reflection that he did not.

That story may or may not be true—though it is in fact better authenticated than most. The

point is that no one who heard it or retailed it in Paris thought for a moment of dismissing it as *prima facie* incredible. If it did not happen it might just as well have happened. That was one kind of influence operating on the Paris Press. Another was the relationship, more direct or less direct, in which most papers stood to the Quai d'Orsay. When a government department in any country has important news to dispense the papers have a strong inducement to keep in its good graces by furthering its policy. Nowhere is that weakness of human nature put to better use than at the French Foreign Office. And to complete the picture it must be added that the three English and American dailies in Paris were all of a pronounced anti-Liberal colour.

These factors cannot be left out of account. The papers inevitably made the atmosphere of the Conference. All of them, whether clerical, royalist or republican—all in fact except avowed Socialist organs—poured out a daily stream of propaganda in the interests primarily of France and her claims, and secondarily of whatever nationality a particular paper might have reason to champion. Responsible delegates, it may be contended, would rise superior to such influences as these. Even responsible delegates, it must be replied, are human. Public opinion has and must have its weight in such situations.

It may be questioned whether the Paris Press did actually represent the public opinion of France. But it wore all the appearance of rep-

resenting it. And the fact that every delegate, and every member of every commission attached to the delegations, and every journalist charged with interpreting the Conference to his countrymen at home, imbibed morning by morning as the first intellectual diet of his day, the *ex parte* expression of one particular point of view, based on one particular political doctrine and dictated by a particular sectional or national interest, did unquestionably create a force of prejudice and partisanship for whose effects too little allowance has been made.

It is easy, as has been said, to excuse the exaggerated nationalism of France in view of what France had suffered. But there was more in it than a mere reaction from the strain of four years of war. France's attitude was determined by a double and overmastering fear. Half of it was the fear of renewed German aggression. Twice in fifty years France had been invaded by the same enemy. She thought and spoke of those attacks as utterly unprovoked. She had no memory for Napoleon's intransigeance in 1870, and no regard for the part played by the balance of power system and the Russian alliance in 1914. She put no trust in the power of any political instrument like the League of Nations to protect her in the future. Her hope of security rested solely on the emasculation of Germany and a new strategic frontier for defence.

That was one fear, the military. The other was the economic. France had failed hopelessly

to face her financial situation while the war lasted. She had refused to impose new taxes. She had piled up a prodigious debt. (Her war costs to March, 1918, totalled 182,000,000,000 francs—nearly £7,300,000,000). She had poured out paper money in streams. By the end of the war every statesman who faced the facts squarely read in them the menace of imminent bankruptcy. The one hope was a vast indemnity. It was that hope that had governed the conduct of French finance throughout the war. It was the desperate need of such a remedy that dictated the attitude of French politicians and people on financial discussions throughout the Conference. No one will be disposed to pass a harsh judgment on France for her preoccupation with her own perils. It is stressed here only to emphasise the part it played in creating the environment that surrounded the Conference.

It was on such a stage that the actors began to take their places towards the end of December, 1918. The representatives of the British Dominions had been gathering for some weeks before. Col. House was already an old inhabitant of Paris, and President Wilson had brought other members of the American delegation with him on the *George Washington* in the middle of December. The Japanese arrived late, but the beginning of January found most of the delegations with their retinues of officials establishing themselves in Paris. The British Government had secured for its headquarters the Majestic and Astoria and two

or three smaller hotels, near the Arc de Triomphe. Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Balfour took up residence a few hundred yards away in the Rue Nitot, and President Wilson, who at first lived in the Villa Murat, near the Parc Monceau, settled down a minute's walk from the British Prime Minister in the Place des États Unis. The American delegation as a whole was installed at the Crillon in the Place de la Concorde, the Italians were at the Edouard VII., the Japanese at the Bristol in the Place Vendôme, the Belgians at the Lotti close by, and the Chinese at the Lutetia on the south of the river. The smaller nations represented found various abiding-places, and apart from them there arrived to hover on the outskirts of the Conference sundry delegations armed with nothing better than a claim—which in most cases remained entirely unrecognised—to a *locus standi* in the discussions. Among such were the Persians and Egyptians, and Esthonians, and Georgians, and Armenians, while in the third month of the sittings a new liveliness was infused into the proceedings by the arrival of a particularly active Irish-American delegation, intent on securing from the Conference an understanding that direct consideration should be given to the claims of the Irish Republic.

In one respect the small nations struck a new note in Paris. For the most part ruled out of court by the Conference itself, they applied themselves as an alternative to impressing public opinion outside. There were two ways of conducting

that kind of propaganda, through the newspapers and through pamphlets and other specialised literature. To those expedients, therefore, every nation desirous of stating a case betook itself. The presses of Paris poured out a ceaseless stream of propaganda literature, Polish and Esthonian and Korean and Georgian and Russian (anti-Bolshevik) and Chinese. Even the Japanese did not disdain to reply unofficially through this medium to allegations in regard to Shantung. At the same time invitations to educative lunches and propaganda dinners poured in from every side on the Allied journalists and anyone else whose influence on the public was of any account. How much came of it all is a matter of opinion. No one intent on following seriously the main stream of the Conference had much time to spare for its tributaries. But the small nations, among whom the Poles had developed their propaganda into almost a *tour de force* of efficiency, did at least succeed in keeping themselves and their troubles before the public mind. They had undeniably a place, even though a very minor place, on the stage of the Conference. They intensified the sense of the complexity and magnitude of the problems to be solved, and their activities keyed up the general tension of Paris to a still higher pitch. They were essentially a part of the setting.

Chapter III

THE CONFERENCE MACHINE

BY the middle of January the component parts of the Conference machine were assembled. The plenipotentiaries of each Power were in Paris, with small armies of permanent officials and other advisers to support them. The Hotel Astoria became a miniature Whitehall. The Foreign Office, the Board of Trade, the Treasury, the War Office, had each made its contribution. In the week the Conference opened the principal officials attached to the British delegation numbered two hundred, but that figure was multiplied several times by the addition of typists and other subordinates. There was further a large staff of telegraphists, Scotland Yard men, motor-drivers and printers. A detail which need figure less prominently in permanent than it did in contemporary record, was the grant by the British Government of dress allowances to its officials of both sexes at the rate of £30 for men and £25 for women.

Similar organisations were set up by the other Powers. France, of course, had her own civil service on the spot. At the Crillon the American delegates could call on particularly competent

panels of advisers, built up by the selection of the ablest university and business men in the United States in addition to the regular Government officials. The work was necessarily specialised, and at any moment data or documents on any question that might emerge were ready for the call of the national plenipotentiaries. In the case of Great Britain each of the Dominion Premiers brought a small secretariat, and frequent meetings of the British Empire Delegation as a whole were held. In addition there was a general British secretariat, with Sir Maurice Hankey at its head.

One important element in the British representation was the contingent of M.I. (Military Intelligence) men, who came and went ceaselessly between Paris and every remote corner of Europe. Their collective knowledge was immense, being rivalled only, if at all, by the store of information amassed by the Food Administration through its ubiquitous agents. They formed part of a group of soldiers who showed that to be military is not of necessity to be militarist, as witness a coterie who used to sit far into the night discussing the League of Nations as an antidote to Bolshevism; or the General who circulated a memorandum pointing out that armies were instruments for imposing one's political will on some one else, not for reconstructing the world, and that if the latter was the object a more effective agency was the Y. M. C. A.

Such details as these are of value only as showing the working material available at Paris. None

of the organisations touched on was intended in the first instance for the service of the Conference as a whole. The business of each national contingent was merely to prepare briefs for its own plenipotentiaries. Fortunately some co-ordination was later effected through the medium of Conference commissions.

It was, then, on such a stage as was described in the last chapter, and with such equipment as has been outlined in this, that the Conference faced its task in the middle of January. It met without principle and without plan. The French, as hosts of the Conference, had indeed prepared some suggestions on procedure, but they never got far beyond the stage of suggestion. In any case principle was more important than plan, and it was on principle that the Conference registered its first serious failure.

That failure consisted in a complete neglect to realise what had preceded the Conference. If Germany had surrendered unconditionally, if there had been no agreement as to the nature of the peace to be concluded, the Conference would have been justified in laying down its own principles and applying them as it chose. In the case of Austria and Turkey and Bulgaria, it was so justified. But Germany had not surrendered unconditionally. She had surrendered on the strength of the Allies' pledge in the Lansing Note of November 5th. That, and that alone, governed the conditions of the coming peace, for the detailed stipulations of the armistice of November 11th

affected only the armistice period and not the permanent settlement.

The position, therefore, was clear, so far at least as relations with Germany were concerned. She was disarmed and powerless, the Allies could do with her what they would. But they had already pledged themselves to do with her one particular thing—to make peace with her on the basis of the Fourteen Points. That being so, the function of the Conference was plain. Its business was to constitute itself, or to constitute out of itself, a judicial body, charged with interpreting in the light of the existing situation the agreed formula—the Fourteen Points and the contents of the subsequent addresses—much as the United States Supreme Court interprets the provisions of the agreed formula known as the American Constitution in regulation of differences between State and State or between a State and the Union. President Wilson was a member of the American delegation. If there was anything obscure in his addresses he was there to give an authoritative definition of its meaning. Steering their course by that clear principle the Allies might have avoided half the difficulties that obstructed and protracted their discussions till the breakdown of the whole negotiations was menaced.

But the Conference at the outset agreed neither on this principle nor on any other. Each Allied nation knew very clearly what it wanted for itself, but apart from that its delegates came to Paris with their minds receptively blank. On the vital

question of whether the Germans, as parties to the terms on which the war was ended, were to have some say in the interpretation of those terms, or whether the Allies were to draft their own peace and simply hand it to the Germans to sign, no agreement or understanding had been reached.

The middle of January, therefore, found some sixty or seventy delegates assembled, all in considerable perplexity as to how to begin. They were too large a body for detailed discussion—though that was not fully realised until later,—and at the same time the leading personalities were not reconciled to the loss of authority that a subdivision of functions would have involved. The principal Powers indeed took charge of the proceedings before the Conference had actually opened at all. January 14th saw the first of a series of preliminary sittings attended by the representatives of Great Britain, America, France and Italy, with the Japanese sometimes present and sometimes not. This body was virtually a continuation of the Supreme Inter-Allied Council, which had sat during the later stages of the war at Versailles. For the purposes of the moment it was self-appointed, having as yet no formal status as a constituent part of the Conference. That, indeed, would have been impossible, for the Conference itself had no formal existence till after its first Plenary Session was held.

That session was fixed for January 18th, but before it took place an important little controversy had to be fought out. It had so far been as-

sumed that the Conference would carry out its work with the maximum of publicity. The first of President Wilson's Fourteen Points, with its insistence on "open covenants of peace openly arrived at," was to all appearance decisive on that. An unprecedented assemblage of journalists of all nations, white, yellow, and black, had gathered at Paris. The French Government had provided as an Inter-Allied Press Club, the Maison Dufayel, a vast and ornate mansion in the Champs Élysées. It had further been conceded that while the censorship over all papers published in France would remain there should be no interference whatever with the outward messages of British and American correspondents. In spite of these elaborate provisions for acquainting the public of the world with the work of the Conference the council of major Powers three days before the opening of the Conference promulgated an astonishing fiat. Not only was the Press to be excluded from the sittings of the Conference, but members of the Conference were to be pledged to have no communication with journalists, while the Press on its part would be prohibited from publishing any information on the discussions beyond what would be contained in a daily official communiqué.

So intolerable an attempt to swathe the proceedings of the Conference in secrecy from the outset was met by immediate and vigorous protests. The American journalists exerted pressure on President Wilson, the British on Mr. Lloyd George. Their case was so unanswerable that

the statesmen had perforce to yield. In the words of the old jingle,

> They rose to deny
> That they meant to imply
> Just so much as their words seemed to indicate.

A compromise was struck on the understanding that

> "representatives of the Press shall be admitted to the meetings of the Full Conference, but on necessary occasions the deliberations of the Conference may be held *in camera*."

That arrangement was on the face of it reasonable. No one could take exception, having regard to the delicacy and moment of the issues under discussion, to occasional sessions *in camera*. None the less the initial zest for secrecy inevitably gave rise to disturbing reflections, which the subsequent course of the Conference went very far to justify. The whole proposal as to publicity turned out, moreover, to be mere window-dressing. Having consented to admit the Press to Plenary Sessions of the Conference the Five-Power delegates effectively eluded the Press by holding practically no Plenary Sessions at all, and making them, when they were held, mere instruments for the automatic endorsement of decisions arrived at in secret by the Five-Power Council.

Altogether in the whole five months and more between January 18th and June 28th, when the German Peace was signed, no more than six Plen-

ary Sessions took place, five of them open to the Press and one held *in camera*. As landmarks of the Conference they are worth a word of individual mention. The first, on January 18th, marked the formal inauguration of the Conference.* At it M. Clemenceau was elected permanent chairman of the Conference, and a general secretariat, with M. Dutasta, an official of the French Foreign Office, at its head, was created. At the second, a week later, a Commission was appointed to draft the League of Nations Covenant, and the opportunity was taken by the small nations (if that term can properly be applied to states of the area of Brazil, and the population of China) to make a bitter but unavailing protest against the autocratic usurpation of authority by the five major Powers. At the third Plenary Session, on February 14th, the first draft of the League of Nations Covenant was presented. At the fourth, on April 11th, the Commission on International Labour Legislation laid its report before the Conference. At the fifth, on April 28th, the final draft of the Covenant of the League of Nations was approved. At the sixth, on May 6th, the eve of the presentation of the treaty to Germany, the delegates of the lesser Powers had communicated to them in secret session the terms of the peace that had been formulated for them by President Wilson, Mr. Lloyd George and M. Clemenceau.

* The number of delegates each nation was to have had already been decided by the Five-Power Group.

That, apart from the ceremonies of the presentation and signature of the treaties, represented the total of the public activities of the Conference. All its real work was done behind rigidly closed doors. It is true that the Press of Great Britain, America, France and Italy, each had a liaison official, who transmitted whatever information the national plenipotentiaries saw fit to dispense. The Americans, indeed, were received every evening by Col. House, and the Italians by Signor Orlando. In the same way Mr. Lloyd George or Mr. Balfour or Lord Robert Cecil occasionally addressed British journalists. But if the public of the different countries had been dependent on such semi-official disclosures for their knowledge of decisions that were settling the fate of the world they would have been blindfolded even more effectively than they were. Speaking generally all the news that was worth getting was obtained by individual journalists through personal investigation and enquiry.

On one ground the virtual abolition of Plenary Sessions could be defended. Such sessions as were held proved the system to be utterly unworkable. As it was no one even affected to take them seriously, except perhaps the delegates from Panama or Uruguay, to whom the occasion gave a platform such as they had never dreamed of as they wove the spells of their eloquence in their subtropical forums. The delegates sat at long horseshoe tables in the Clock Room or the banqueting hall of the Quai d'Orsay, M. Clemenceau in the

chair, with President Wilson and the American delegation on his right, Mr. Lloyd George and the British Empire delegation on his left. Crowds of secretaries and other officials lined the walls behind the delegates. The Press was penned in a confined space at the end of the hall. At an ordinary public meeting in England there is some attempt to preserve silence for the speaker. At a Plenary Session there was none. The principal delegates were frankly bored. They were doing the real work of the Conference in a secret conclave. This public ceremony was merely a concession to the smaller nations and outside opinion. Before the sitting had got far President Wilson and M. Clemenceau and Mr. Lloyd George were usually busy retailing to each other anecdotes or jokes which the privileged officials within earshot of their chairs passed on later, with discretion, to a wider audience. On one occasion Sir Robert Borden stopped in the middle of his speech to protest that the conversation of the magnates made it impossible for him to go on. Speakers from small nations, whom no one wanted to hear but themselves, discoursed with great fluency to no purpose. If any objection of substance was raised M. Clemenceau could be relied on to ride it down from the chair. Altogether the blasphemers who dismissed the Plenary Sessions tersely as "washouts" hit the nail pretty squarely on the head.

Plenary Sessions at all events formed a small enough feature of the Conference machine. That machine consisted essentially of two parts, the

committee of representatives of the five greater Powers, and the various commissions which prepared the material for that Committee's deliberations. The adoption of the commission system was inevitable. If the ground had not been worked over in that way the Conference might have sat till 1921. As it was, every subject of importance that came up for discussion was threshed out by a commission before the Council of Ten, or Five, or Four, tackled it in earnest. In the week after the first Plenary Session, an initial group of commissions was formed,—on responsibilities for the war and war crimes, on ports, railways and waterways, on international labour and on the League of Nations. Others, *e.g.*, on the Saar Valley, Poland, Reparations, the Middle East, were appointed as occasion demanded. A commission was composed partly of delegates, partly of permanent officials. The smaller nations had some representation on it. For the rest their delegates had no other function but to appear before the Council of the Five Powers and state their national case whenever a question that directly affected them was under discussion.

Altogether the treaty with Germany was signed by sixty-six* Allied representatives. Of those not sixty-six, nor eight, nor five, nor four, were responsible for the making of it. It was the work actually of three men. The crowd that surged in tumultuous enthusiasm round M. Clemenceau,

* The number should have been sixty-eight, but the two Chinese delegates refused to sign.

President Wilson and Mr. Lloyd George, as they appeared on the terrace of the Château of Versailles after the signature of the German Treaty knew what it was doing. Sixty-three other men had signed the Treaty for the Allies. These three men had written it.

The creation of the Council of Four, which became in reality a Council of Three, was Mr. Lloyd George's doing. The first Cabinet of the Conference had been a Council of Ten, composed of the Premiers and Foreign Secretaries of the five major Allied States. That Council began its work before the first Plenary Session in January. It sat through February. It sat through three weeks of March. The remaining fifty odd delegates waited. The Allied public waited. Germany, the tide of Spartacism rising higher every day, waited with the rest. Europe drifted steadily towards dissolution. Nothing was settled. Nothing looked like being settled. Reports were received from commissions and referred back to commissions again. The paralysis of indecision had become chronic.

The fourth week-end in March, Mr. Lloyd George spent at Fontainebleau with Mr. Montagu, the Secretary for India, and one or two other advisers. The situation was now desperate. The possible break-up of the Conference was being seriously canvassed. Something had to be done. The British Prime Minister spent his week-end in drafting in outline a peace of his own. With that in his pocket he went back to Paris on the

Monday to propose that the Council of Ten should be cut down by half, and the major half, now a Council of Premiers, apply itself to intensive work with his draft as agenda. The remaining half, converted into a Council of Foreign Secretaries, would be useful (it proved itself in fact singularly useless) as a court of appeal on secondary questions.

So what should have been the Council of Five was constituted. It happened, however, by a merciful dispensation of Providence that the Japanese Prime Minister knew no English or French, and as the need for translation would seriously check the high speed at which the Council was proposing to work, Marquis Saionzi dropped out of the discussions altogether. The Council was now down to four. For most of its existence it actually sat as four, but it is doing Signor Orlando no injustice to say that his presence was of no great moment except when Italian affairs were under discussion. His three colleagues spoke English, while he was at home only with Italian and French, and though Capt. Mantoux, the official Conference interpreter, was in attendance, the Italian Prime Minister could not hope to follow the quick ebb and flow of the informal conversation out of which the decisions emerged. During some of the most critical days of the Council's career, moreover, he was absent altogether, having retired to Rome after the issue of President Wilson's Fiume manifesto. If the composition of the Council had been dictated by regard for in-

dividual capacity instead of by regard for the importance of states, it would have varied in at least one respect. M. Vénisélos could not have been excluded.

The Treaty was thus essentially the work of the triumvirate. So intimate were their deliberations intended to be that at first they dispensed altogether with a secretary, and no official minutes were kept. That arrangement soon came to an end, owing to the frequency with which the Council assembled in the morning to find a complete divergence of opinion among its members as to what had been decided on the previous day. The services of Sir Maurice Hankey, the secretary of the British Empire delegation, were accordingly requisitioned. Even so the discussions were marked by the maximum of informality. They were, of course, carried on in strict privacy, but as experts of all nations were perpetually being called in for advice on particular points a good many windows into the Council chamber were opened. One such occasional visitor reported that he found President Wilson at one end of the room in consultation with experts, and Mr. Lloyd George similarly engaged at the other. Sir Maurice Hankey vibrated uneasily between the two in an attempt to find what they were discussing. Signor Orlando, after sitting for a time disconsolately by himself, button-holed a disengaged expert and quoted *Hamlet* to him in Italian. M. Clemenceau, who was technically presiding, leaned wearily back in his chair with the remark, "Let them go on

talking. They'll tire themselves out in time."

Such, according to a witness who claims to be trustworthy, was the manner in which the treaty with Germany was made. However, that may be, the main fact is incontestable. By the end of March the Conference machine consisted, for practical purposes, of three men sitting usually in President Wilson's library or Mr. Lloyd George's drawing-room. For four years scores of millions of men had looked death in the face. By the end of four years ten millions had died. And after it all three men took the fate of the world in their hands, and by their will the destiny of unborn generations was moulded. It may have been the only way—in the deadlock into which the Conference had drifted, I think personally it was—but it was a strange ending to a war for democracy.

Chapter IV

THE DISCUSSIONS IN BRIEF *

OF all the methods of considering the Peace Conference the chronological is probably as unsatisfactory as any. The Council which took charge of the whole proceedings from the first week worked on no settled plan. It touched spasmodically on this subject or that as some convenience of the moment, or it might be a mere arbitrary choice, dictated. The one fixed principle of the discussions was opportunism. The German Treaty, for example, was in an advanced state before the Council could make up its mind whether that treaty should be signed first and got out of the way, or the settlement with Germany, Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey carried through simultaneously.

None the less there are certain advantages in including the Conference as a whole in one rapid survey, and in such a survey the only method to follow is the chronological. Conveniently enough for that purpose, the discussions divide themselves cleanly into four distinct phases, three of them completed, the fourth as yet incomplete. The first is the era of the Council of Ten; the second the

* Most of the matters touched on in this chapter are discussed in greater detail elsewhere.

era of the Council of Four, down to the presentation of the German Treaty; the third the era still of the Four, covering the reconsideration, revision and signature of the Treaty; the fourth the era of the Supreme Council left in power to carry out the mass of unfinished business connected with the Austrian, Hungarian, Bulgarian and Turkish settlements.

I

The genesis of the Council of Ten has been described elsewhere. In effect it created itself, but was formally authorised by the first Plenary Session of the Conference on January 18th. Its first business was to face the question of the settlement of Russia in general, and the question of Russian representation at the Conference in particular. Out of its deliberations came the Prinkipo proposal, which was launched on January 22nd, and may be regarded as having finally passed from the sphere of practical politics, when the date—February 15th—on which the projected conference should have been held had come and gone.

Meanwhile various commissions (on Reparations, Responsibilities, Ports and Waterways) were appointed and got to work, but the main business visibly lagged. The two months and a half that had passed since the armistice had had its inevitable effect on Europe, and on January 25th a strongly phrased note was addressed by the major Allies at Paris to sundry small nations, warning them that any attempt to further their

claims to territory by forcible occupation would gravely prejudice the ultimate settlement of their case.

A Plenary Session to appoint Commissions on the League of Nations and on International Labour regulation, was held on January 25th. That was the last time the full Conference was to meet for some weeks. The Council of Ten from this point took supreme charge, summoning Plenary Sessions only as they were needed to give formal ratification to the Council's decisions. The Council itself discussed the disposition of the German colonies, the condition of Poland, Reparation, Italy's Adriatic claims, Arabia and Syria. In connection with the Colonies the mandate principle emerged at the end of January, and a few days later a notable step was taken in another field in the creation of the Supreme Economic Council, with Mr. Hoover as American representative and Lord Robert Cecil as British.

The problems of Central and South-east Europe, involving the rival claims of Czecho-Slovaks and Poles, Jugo-Slavs and Italians, Rumanians and Serbs, were insistent enough to suggest that it took longer to hold the balance between Allies than to settle with the enemy. The Ten received deputation after deputation, listened to their plaints and passed on to the next subject, no visible sign of a solution emerging at any point. Everywhere claims were being registered. France wanted this; Italy demanded that; Greece insisted on territorial extension here; Mr. Hughes, of Australia,

stood pat there. Meanwhile the League of Nations Commission carried forward its work apace, the food missions pursued their humanitarian labours without advertisement, and one after another the anti-Bolshevik factions in Russia declined association with the Prinkipo proposal.

In the second week in February came a pause in the work of the Council. On the 8th Mr. Lloyd George returned to London, where Labour troubles urgently called for his attention, and five days later Mr. Wilson sailed for America to deal with Bills that needed his signature before Congress rose. The dispersal of the chiefs was made the occasion for the usual inspired hints that work was well forward and the signing of the Treaty in sight. It may have been, but it needed powerful glasses to descry it.

Germany meanwhile was struggling with Spartacism, and doubts on the issue of the contest opened up grave possibilities for Paris. She had failed to fulfil certain armistice obligations, and Marshal Foch was urging the tightening of the military screw. Against disquiet on that score was to be set the completion of the first stage of the task of the most diligent Commission of all, that on the League of Nations, which presented a full draft of the Covenant of the League to a Plenary Session of the Conference a few hours before Mr. Wilson set sail.

That happened to be the day on which the projected All-Russian conference at Prinkipo should have been held. That proposal having ended in

smoke, thanks largely to the efforts of the Russian émigrés in Paris, the militarists had their chance of profiting by the conciliators' failure. Mr. Lloyd George being in England, Mr. Winston Churchill, though neither a delegate to the Peace Conference nor a member of the War Cabinet, was permitted to fly to Paris by aeroplane and attend the Council of Ten to urge a military anti-Bolshevik policy, backed by expectations of British assistance, in place of any attempt at negotiation. Only two days later an event occurred that gave that policy a marked impetus. M. Clemenceau, whose bitterness against the Bolsheviks was notorious, was shot by an assassin close to his house in the Rue Franklin, in Passy. Though the wounds proved less grave than was feared, to take measures in his absence which he would certainly have opposed if he were present was out of the question. Not only was the final blow dealt to the Prinkipo proposal, but any thought of action based on the report brought from Moscow by Mr. Bullitt, had, at least for the moment, to be abandoned. Interest shifted to other fields, notably to the Adriatic, in respect of which the conflict between Italy and the Jugo-Slavs took a new turn, the Jugo-Slavs proposing to submit the whole dispute to arbitration at the hands of President Wilson, and Italy hastening to put herself in the wrong by flatly rejecting that reasonable suggestion.

The beginning of March found the Council of Ten resuming serious work. M. Clemenceau,

making a remarkable recovery, was in his place by the end of February, Mr. Lloyd George crossed to Paris on March 5th, President Wilson was expected in the following week. Armistice and blockade questions cropped up, and Mr. Lloyd George, reinforcing the urgent representations of different food commissioners, created something of a sensation by reading a letter from General Plumer, dwelling on the discontent caused among British soldiers on the Rhine by the spectacle of hunger and distress among children in the occupied area.

President Wilson's return had the effect of recalling the Council of Ten, not for the first time or the last, to a sense of its failure to achieve what it had created itself to achieve. Mr. Lloyd George was urgently needed in England and was preparing to leave Paris, when a joint letter was addressed to him by President Wilson, M. Clemenceau and Signor Orlando, appealing to him to remain for the fortnight which the signatories confidently hoped would see their labours, so far as concerned the German Treaty, completed. The Prime Minister stayed, and as though to create an impression of progress German financial delegates were a few days later, to the scandal of Marshal Foch, invited to Versailles. As a matter of fact they came not to discuss peace questions, but purely Armistice questions, and they went in the end not to Versailles but to Pont Maxence, the peril of their contiguity to Paris being thus sensibly diminished.

At this point, Mr. Lloyd George, under circumstances described in an earlier chapter, abandoned the last shreds of his faith in the Council of Ten. The sedative influence of a week-end at Fontainebleau gave him inspiration, and he went back to Paris to enunciate the doctrine of peace not by committee but by caucus.

Four men in a library, not ten in a Foreign Office salon, were to reshape the world. As things stood it was probably the only thing to do, and it was done. The ten yielded place unwept to the four. They had done much to clear the ground. They had brought problems to light, if they had not solved them. Their failure, everything considered, was not as bad as it looked. But it was bad enough.

II

The Four hid their deeds behind a veil even more opaque than had concealed the endeavours of the Ten. The Ten had at least its M. Pichon, and though M. Pichon's weekly communications to the Press had usually to be qualified or withdrawn altogether as soon as his colleagues saw them in print they did at any rate represent some concession to the principles of publicity. The Four met without a secretary (though that unworkable arrangement was altered later), they kept no minutes, and the so-called communiqués handed out through the Press sections of the different delegations were for the most part hardly worth the money it cost to telegraph them. From

such announcements as were made it appeared that the Council was talking of everything in general,—Poland, the Saar Valley, Arabia and Syria, both banks of the Rhine. All kinds of small nations, Georgians, Armenians, Persians, Egyptian Nationalists, hovered about hoping for a hearing, and a singularly active and resourceful Irish-American delegation managed to liven up the Conference considerably.

Various members of the Four gave signs of spasmodic attempts to speed up their fellows. In the first week of April some astonishment was created in circles where the state of the discussions was known by an intimation, inspired by Mr. Lloyd George, that all the main principles of the peace had been settled and that drafting would be proceeded with immediately. Simultaneously the Prime Minister declared cryptically in an interview in the *Matin* (of April 6th) "Wait for a fortnight." The next day it was made known that President Wilson had wired to America for his ship, the *George Washington,* then lying at the Navy Yard at Brooklyn. There was plenty in all this to set the quidnuncs talking, but very little to bring peace substantially nearer.

About this time news of the Bullitt mission and report began to leak out—I think I was the first to send the facts to England—and was industriously denied night by night in the House of Commons. (The *Temps,* by the way, had just published a notable article advocating the feeding of Russia.) The Northcliffe papers meanwhile were

attacking the Prime Minister daily for his "eccentric and unstable attitude," and in the middle of April Mr. Lloyd George went back to Westminster to make his reply to the mass-telegrams despatched by the critics of his supposed attitude on indemnities and Russia. The International Labour Charter had at this time just been adopted, the Nansen feeding scheme was on the point of being approved by the Four, and on the 14th the invitation to the Germans to send plenipotentiaries to Versailles was announced. The end seemed in sight at last. There might after all be peace early in May. Dates for President Wilson's final departure from France were bandied confidently about—without the smallest authority.

At this vital point various difficulties, foreseen and unforeseen, came to a head. The Germans proposed in the first instance to send mere officials to Versailles to receive the treaty and take it to Weimar for discussion, not despatching plenipotentiaries till the time for negotiation and signature arrived. That project the Allies vetoed peremptorily, and it was promptly abandoned. The Fiume controversy was blowing up fast. On April 22nd, Signor Orlando withdrew from the Council of Four. On the 23rd President Wilson issued his manifesto. On the 25th the Italian delegation left Paris altogether. In their absence the German delegation, headed by Count Brockdorff-Rantzau, the Foreign Minister of the German Republic, arrived at Versailles, while the question of Shantung was fought out by the Council of

Three (as it now was) at Paris. Even more important, the revised draft of the Covenant of the League of Nations was unanimously approved by the fifth Plenary Session of the Conference. Preparations for the presentation of the Treaty went forward regardless of Italy, but on May 4th the Three formally invited the Italians back, and on the morning of the 7th they were in Paris once more. The same day the Treaty was presented to the German plenipotentiaries at the Trianon Palace Hotel, at Versailles. Simultaneously announcement was made of the pledge given to France by Great Britain and America jointly to come to her assistance in case of unprovoked attack by Germany. On the same day also it was announced that a number of mandates * had been allotted by the Council of Three.

III

The Germans applied themselves immediately to dissecting the Treaty and launching on the Allies a cloud of notes, which were referred individually to the appropriate commissions of the Conference. The main points on which opinion among the Allies was divided were the desira-

* To Great Britain German East Africa; to the Union of South Africa German South-West Africa; to the British Empire Naura (where is Naura, and what is the British Empire going to do with it?); to New Zealand the German Samoan Islands; to Australia certain German Pacific islands south of the Equator; to Japan German Pacific islands north of the Equator; the mandate for Togoland and the Cameroons to be settled between Great Britain and France.

bility of oral discussions, the whole question of indemnity and the admission of Germany to the League of Nations. The case for oral negotiations was strong. Such discussions were being carried on daily between Allied and German officials on shipping questions, on finance, on food, and it could not well be contended that what was proper for subordinates in regard to secondary matters would be improper for principals in regard to primary. But the Council of Four, or certain members of it, were frankly apprehensive of the attempts skilful German diplomatists might make to play them off against one another. President Wilson was definitely in favour of oral discussions. Mr. Lloyd George was said to have been first for, then against. He was certainly against at the end. M. Clemenceau was against all the time. The issue was decided accordingly. The principal negotiators never met face to face till the day of the signing at Versailles.

In the matter of the indemnity strong pressure in favour of some relaxation was exerted both by Americans at the Crillon and British at the Majestic. On that and other grounds several officials attached to the American delegation, offered their resignations to President Wilson. The chief representative of the British Treasury, Mr. Maynard Keyes, took a similar course a little later. The desire of the British and Americans on the League of Nations Commission to admit the enemy powers to the League without more ado was successfully opposed by the French.

Germany's intentions, meanwhile, were completely in doubt. Would she sign? If so would the delegates already at Versailles inscribe their names or give place to successors to whom the task was less repugnant? No one knew, but the Allies made a point of referring with calculated emphasis to the steps they were ready to take to enforce their terms. Finally Count Rantzau went to Spa to consult with his fellow-Ministers. About the same time, to widen the field of interest, the Austrian delegation, headed by Dr. Renner, arrived at St. Germain, there to wait till the leisurely progress of the Allies with their treaty should reach its term. The Four occupied themselves meanwhile with various subsidiary issues, Greece's claims in Asia Minor, the difference between Belgium and Holland over the Scheldt, the recognition of Koltchak, and the disposal of the Turkish Empire, a matter on which Mr. Montagu and representatives of Mohammedanism in India addressed the Council with some force, pointing out the dangers that might be run if the complete break-up of the great Mohammedan empire were attempted.

While notes continued to fly to and fro between Versailles and Paris the Allies themselves were arguing out the question of whether the occupied area on the Rhine should be administered under civil or military law, the civil solution, supported by Great Britain and America, finally carrying the day in face of Marshal Foch's vigorous opposition. On May 29th the German counterpro-

posals were handed to the Allies, and their consideration by the Four began. A factor of real importance at this stage was the physical and mental exhaustion not only of the four chief negotiators, but of the members of the various commissions on which the Four depended for guidance. It could not have been otherwise, in view of the history of the preceding five months, but it was none the less a profound misfortune that at the moment of all moments when a fresh and dispassionate survey of the whole situation was needed it should have to be made by tired men, incapable, apart from any question of inclination, of applying themselves anew, with unimpaired vigour, to work on which they had spent themselves month after month already. In point of fact comparatively few changes were made in the Treaty. What were made were made largely at the instance of the British. On the 1st of June a miniature Cabinet meeting was held at Mr. Lloyd George's house in the Rue Nitot, all the principal Ministers not already in Paris coming from England to attend. The whole trend of the meeting was toward a moderate settlement, an unexpected supporter of that view being Mr. Winston Churchill, who hinted very broadly, as War Minister, that the British Army was in no mood for fresh adventures into Germany as an instrument for imposing a policy of signature by coercion.

Through the first fortnight of June the discussions swung to and fro. In Conference circles

generally minor issues like the controversy on the publication of the Treaty (though the principle involved there can hardly be described as minor) and the relation between French clericals and the would-be founders of a Rhineland Republic, filled a stage that might have been occupied with greater things. The Four were working over the Treaty afresh, Mr. Lloyd George pressing for certain changes of substance, President Wilson showing something less than his natural enthusiasm for modifications that would clearly have narrowed the gulf which separated the principles of the Treaty from the principles of the Fourteen Points. The President, it appeared, was in some degree discouraged by his failure to carry on the first draft what other people, who had given him little help then, were now trying to carry on the second, and at the same time he was peculiarly anxious, both on personal grounds and from a vivid consciousness of the daily increasing peril of anarchy in Europe, to get the Treaty signed and in operation without a day's needless delay. That, at any rate, was the view taken of the President's attitude by persons in close touch with him at the time, and there is no reason to distrust their judgment. Ultimately some modification of the Treaty terms was granted in regard to the Saar Valley and the rate of reduction of the German army, the indemnity proposals were made at the same time a little less harsh and a little less impracticable, a plebiscite was substituted in Up-

per Silesia for the proposed naked transfer to Poland.

Those terms, presented on June 16th, Count Brockdorff-Rantzau immediately took back to Weimar. Everything now hung on Germany's decision. As to that, omniscient rumour took a new shape every day. The soundest prophets foretold a decision to sign, but not till a new government was in power. So it turned out. The time limit set by the Allies was to expire at 7 p. m. on Monday, June 23rd. On Friday, the 20th, the Scheidemann administration fell. On the Sunday the National Assembly at Weimar authorised a new government, with Herr Bauer at its head, to sign. At five o'clock on the Monday, two hours before the Allied armies were timed to advance, the formal assurance was given to the appointed representative of the Allies at Versailles. The Eiffel Tower wireless feverishly flashed off to the Rhine the agreed signal "Fermez les Portes," the Mont Valérien batteries crashed out the news to Paris, the air-raid syrens took it up, and the boulevards that night allowed themselves their first carnival since November 11th. The Germans had striven for a further forty-eight hours' respite, but the sinking of their fleet two days earlier at Scapa did not forward their cause with the Allies, and not an hour's grace was conceded. Five days later came the crowning act of the weary drama in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles.

IV

The ceremony of the signature over, the Allied delegates scattered fast and far. President Wilson and a large contingent of American officials left the Gare Montparnasse the same evening for Brest, where the *George Washington* lay with steam up. Even so they were not the first away. Mr. Massey, the Prime Minister of New Zealand, leaving the Hall of Mirrors as soon as the Empire delegates had signed, whirled off in a car to the Gare St. Lazare, caught the boat train to Havre, put to sea in a destroyer awaiting him there, boarded the *Mauretania* in mid-Channel, and before most of Paris was in bed had settled well down to the Atlantic voyage, en route for home via San Francisco and the Pacific. At ten the next morning Mr. Lloyd George and the Dominion delegates left for London. Twenty hours after the Treaty was signed the Conference had faded to a mere shadow of itself.

The Council of Four had gone for ever. In its place came a Council, nominally, of Five, on which Mr. Balfour represented Great Britain, and Mr. Lansing, who soon gave place to Mr. Polk, America. Mr. Henry White and General Bliss still remained in attendance. That Council carried through the signature of the Austrian Treaty and the presentation of the Bulgarian. It discussed the eternal problem of Russia to little purpose, it despatched Mr. Hoover to Buda-Pesth, and, stim-

ulated by his report, succeeded in checking the Rumanian incursion into Hungary. It drafted a Hungarian Treaty, and sat down to wait till a Hungarian Government should be formed sufficiently stable to sign it. It resolved to let the Turkish settlement slide till America should accept or refuse a mandate. It sent a mission to Poland to investigate the treatment of the Jews. It listened to the report of the American mission that had visited Syria.

But Paris was no longer the diplomatic centre of the world. The League of Nations organising committee had moved to London before the signing of the Treaty. The Supreme Economic Council (now an international body) had followed it. Foreign Offices were once more getting busy on their own account. The Supreme Council looked more like decaying and disappearing than expiring by any summary act. As I write it is still in being. It has signalised its declining days by begging Germany to assist it in blockading Russia, and by preventing the Peace Treaty from coming into force at the time when all conditions necessary to its operation had been fulfilled. The fate of the Council, it appears at the moment, is to make way first for some even paler simulacrum, and then for the League of Nations as the supreme diplomatic instrument of the world.

Chapter V

SOME PERSONAL FACTORS

THAT the whole character of the Peace Treaty depended in the last resort on the personal factors that had gone to its shaping is self-evident. It was the result not of any blind play of forces but of the deliberate volition of the three or four men primarily responsible for drafting it. In that sense the personalities of the three or four men are the only personalities that really matter.

But each member of that inner circle was in his turn influenced in greater or lesser degree by certain other personalities. Neither President Wilson nor Mr. Lloyd George nor M. Clemenceau relied on his own unaided knowledge and judgment. There were obvious reasons why none of them should. So far as acquaintance with world politics went each one of the three was conspicuously ill equipped for the task of settling delicate and complex international controversies. Mr. Wilson was imbued with the traditional insularity of his nation in regard to external affairs. Mr. Lloyd George had devoted his public life, down to 1914, exclusively to domestic politics. His one excursion into the foreign field had been the notorious

Agadir speech of 1911. He had never, as he admitted with a disarming candour (which, however, scandalised a *Times* leader-writer), heard the name of Teschen till it emerged as the bone of contention between Czecho-Slovaks and Poles. M. Clemenceau, from the mere length of his political career—he was first elected Deputy in 1871, on the morrow of the armistice between Bismarck and Favre—was probably better qualified than either of his colleagues to pronounce on most of the questions at issue. But the French Premier had never held the portfolio of Foreign Affairs. He had in fact consistently discouraged excursions by France into fields where she had no interests at stake, and he, like the British Prime Minister and the American President, depended largely on the knowledge and the counsel of advisers who themselves had no status in the sessions of the Council.

In discussing the chief personalities of the Conference one necessary reservation must be made. The veil of secrecy with which the work of the Council of Four was shrouded was in the main effective. The peacemakers were never under direct observation. Even when a statesman's acts and words are patent to the world it is no easy matter to sketch a portrait of him that critics generally will acknowledge as just. When all that can be seen of his features is what reveals itself through such a smoke-screen as enveloped the Council of Four, the task is tenfold more difficult. It is better to emphasise that limitation than to gloss it

over. My own judgments are based on information acquired from many different sources. They are to the best of my knowledge accurate, but the last sin I should desire to commit in such a case is that of dogmatism.

Among Conference personalities three naturally stand out conspicuous. Most of the various mots inspired by the triumviri and their work are by this time current coin, but one or two may still be worth the space it will take to record them. The observation that "the worst of President Wilson is that he talks like Jesus Christ and acts like Lloyd George" stands really to the credit of an English M.P., and was conveyed across the channel by a fellow Member visiting Paris. But M. Clemenceau had already given the simile a start. His alleged complaint that "fourteen points is a lot for the President to insist on; le bon Dieu lui-même n'a que dix" may possibly be apocryphal. So may the deprecatory reply to some critic, "What can I do, sitting there between Jesus Christ and Napoleon?" But the French Premier's remark that "he liked talking to Col. House because he was so practical; the President talked like Jesus Christ," I know to be authentic.

Whatever the President talked like, he was without question the dominating figure of the Conference. That was inevitable from the outset. The Peace formula was his formula, and he was necessarily the first authority on its interpretation. He was, moreover, head of the one state with no financial or territorial claims to prefer,

and the one state that remained economically powerful at a moment when economic factors were determining the destiny of mankind as never before. More than that, the President had established by his speeches a moral domination that set him on a different level from either of his immediate collaborators in the making of peace. Though long before the discussions on the German Treaty were over half his former admirers were attacking him fiercely, Mr. Wilson remained the foremost personality at Paris to the last.

As to the nature of the influence the President exerted there is no conflict of opinion. He was there to make a Fourteen Points peace, and he did his best to make it. He failed in part, but he did not fail for want of trying. All through the Conference, except, perhaps, during the revision of the German Treaty, when Mr. Lloyd George suddenly took the field as an apostle of moderation, Mr. Wilson was the one force on the Council of Four making consistently for "a clean peace." It was in his name that the Prinkipo proposal was put forward as a solution of the Bolshevist problem, and he gave unhesitating support to the later Nansen scheme for the feeding of Russia. His natural hostility to the untenable claims of French extremists made most of the Paris Press his enemy, while his failure to achieve fully what he set out to achieve ranged against him at the end large sections of his Radical friends in Great Britain and America.

Mr. Wilson was not in every way qualified for

the rôle he had to fill at Paris. He is self-reliant to a fault, tending neither to seek nor to welcome advice except from one or two chosen counsellors. He is not a negotiator, neither had he come to Paris prepared for negotiation between acquisitive Allies instead of negotiation with Germany. He was essentially a judge, not an advocate. His fourteen points had been accepted by the Allies, and he had come to Europe to apply them, not to defend them. On the whole, moreover, the magnitude of the powers he had exercised in America for two years as Chief Executive in time of war formed a poor training for the task of subtle negotiation with men enjoying equal status with himself at the Conference.

The President, like many lesser men at the Conference, was faced by one ever-present problem. He had to choose between accepting a settlement falling far short of his ideals, and deserting the Conference altogether in the knowledge that without him the settlement would be much worse than it was. Evidences of his uncertainty and hesitation between the two courses are not lacking. The most notable was his summons to his ship, the *George Washington,* in April. That was meant as a demonstration and a warning, and it was not without some effect. But its main value is as a side-light on the President's frame of mind at the moment. In the end he stayed on. Two factors more than any others determined him on that, one of them operative throughout, the other only in the latter stages of the Conference. His belief in

the possibilities of the League of Nations was profound. To get that, together with a settlement that would at least liberate the dependent nations and bear some recognisable resemblance to a Fourteen Point Peace, he was ready to sacrifice much. He did sacrifice much, perhaps more than he realised, but he believed the League would have power to right within a reasonable interval such wrongs as the Treaty embodied. The second factor that weighed with Mr. Wilson was the overwhelming need of the world for an early peace at almost any cost. The whole of Eastern Europe, as he knew well from Mr. Hoover's reports, was charged with volcanic ferment due directly to economic distress. To that ferment the procrastination of the Conference powerfully contributed. It was his recognition of that, his consciousness that it was a race between peace and dissolution, that led Mr. Wilson at the time of the revision of the treaty to resist even delays that might have been devoted to the improvement of the terms.

There was one further difficulty that embarrassed the President. That was political opposition at home. The defeat of the Democrats at the November elections served to disparage Mr. Wilson's authority by suggesting that he was speaking at Paris for only a minority of his countrymen. Criticism by Republicans in the United States seemed to confirm that judgment. It would have halved the President's difficulties if he had thought fit to bring half a dozen Republican Senators with him to Paris to study on the spot the

problems of the Conference and his own attitude towards them.

A similar psychological failure was Mr. Wilson's sustained omission to visit the devastated areas of France. In point of fact the very pressure exerted to get him there increased his reluctance to go and see "frightfulness" exploited. But the French never forgave him. It was characteristic of Mr. Lloyd George's swiftness to sense a situation that he went to see the devastation at the first moment possible—and made a speech about it at the second.

One initial mistake, far-reaching in its effects, was the President's failure to take a firm stand at the outset against the tradition of secrecy the heads of the Conference sought to establish. To insist on open covenants openly arrived at does not necessarily mean that every informal discussion of delicate points shall be reported in the Press. But to suggest that the Conference proceedings were conducted in the spirit of Point No. 1 is palpable nonsense. A victory for Mr. Wilson on that issue would have meant as much gain as a surrender did loss.

In one other direction the President might have done more than he did. By the end of the war the United States was the one prosperous country in the world. If early in the Peace Conference Mr. Wilson had been in a position to assure a half-bankrupt Europe that America was prepared to back with its vast financial resources a peace based on the principles the American President

had laid down, that offer would have met with a warmth of response that would have strengthened his hand immensely throughout the negotiations. Unfortunately no such offer was made.

There was one other member of the American delegation who exercised a considerable influence on the settlement. There might have been more than one, but the President is reticent to the point of secretiveness. At Paris he saw a number of people. Deputation after deputation waited on him and got ten or fifteen minutes each. But he lived none the less in relative retirement. He practically never entertained or dined out. Outside the Council of Four he talked habitually and freely to only one man, his long-standing friend and confidant, Col. House. There are few parallels to the position Col. House had made. He has never held any Federal office in America. It may be predicted with certainty that he never will. "If you ever hear my name mentioned in connection with any office on earth," he said to me once, "you can be sure without asking that the rumour is a canard." He is essentially the power behind the throne. The President's thoughts are open to him, he criticises the President's speeches before they are delivered, and a great deal of what the President knows about current affairs he knows because Col. House told him.

Col. House represented America on the Inter-Allied War Council before the Armistice. During the Conference he had his headquarters at the Crillon, and through him the President was kept

in touch not only with the remaining members of the delegation, but with the whole staff of officials and advisers. The Colonel's particular forte was to smooth out differences. He would have made a much worse President than Mr. Wilson, but he might have made a better plenipotentiary. He is a negotiator through and through—a negotiator, be it said, of the best type, shrewd without a suggestion of cunning, and firm without a hint of aggressiveness. Conciliator would perhaps be the better word. How many rocks and shoals he succeeded in circumnavigating at Paris will never be known. His influence, like that of all the American representatives, was exerted uniformly for the attainment of a moderate peace. It is safe to assume—though I have never heard him say so—that the settlement reached fell far short of his hopes. But he can at least take credit for having done more than any other man, except perhaps Lord Robert Cecil, for the safe convoy of the League of Nations into harbour.

In the case of the British delegation as of the American two members only weighed heavily in the counsels of the Conference. Mr. Bonar Law was in charge at Westminster and only paid occasional visits of a day or two at a time to Paris. Lord Milner concerned himself almost exclusively with colonial questions, and colonial questions for the most part settled themselves. Mr. Barnes did much valuable work on the International Labour Commission, but he took little part in the general work of the Conference, though

in the last month he did all that could be done behind the scenes to mitigate the rigour of the terms finally imposed on the Germans.

There remain Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Balfour. It was, of course, on the Prime Minister as a member of the Council of Four, that the main burden of the negotiations rested. His attitude on the Council was too mobile to make it easy to define. There was never much doubt about President Wilson's position or M. Clemenceau's. There was never much certainty about Mr. Lloyd George's. It was easier to define Mr. Wilson's purpose when he was out of sight than Mr. Lloyd George's when he was in full view.

Considerable allowance must be made for the Prime Minister's difficulties, even though they were of his own creation. Like Mr. Wilson he had an election just behind him. Unlike Mr. Wilson he had insisted on having it when it might have stood over. Unlike Mr. Wilson again he had scored a spectacular victory—though a victory that proved hardly less hampering at Paris than the American President's defeat. But for that election the peace negotiations might have opened two months earlier—and for the delay Europe had paid a tragic price in starvation, revolution and social instability. The election had done more than that. It had evoked speeches, from the Prime Minister himself and from others, that kept every flame of bitterness alive and roused

lunatic hopes of an inflated indemnity,* and it had swamped the House of Commons with a majority clamorous for a peace antagonistic in every feature to the principles of the Fourteen Points. That clamour could never be entirely ignored, and at a critical point in the negotiations with Russia it played a large part in wrecking a project on which high hopes had justly been set.

With these millstones round his neck Mr. Lloyd George was cast into the whirlpool of the Conference. All things considered his election record sat lighter on him than might have been expected. His instincts naturally carried him towards President Wilson. If his hands had been free he might have co-operated with the President in the formulation of a treaty based scrupulously on the Fourteen Points. The Prime Minister is at the bottom no Imperialist, either where his own country or any other is concerned. A Wilson peace would naturally commend itself to him more than a Foch peace or a Sonnino peace. When he told the American soldiers months before that Germany could have peace when she wanted it on President Wilson's terms he no doubt meant sincerely —for the moment—what he said.

Throughout the Conference the Prime Minister's attitude was marked by the effects of this play of rival forces. There were moments when he fought single handed for solutions dictated by

* "Mr. Lloyd George," said the *Echo de Paris*, "won his election at the end of last year on a programme tersely enough phrased—The Kaiser to the gallows, and Germany's last sou for war damages."

the spirit of pure Liberalism. I remember, for example, hearing him argue convincingly in deprecation of wild hopes of an exaggerated indemnity (hopes which no one had done more than himself and his political friends to kindle) and in defence of a just settlement of the Polish corridor question. A commission of experts had discussed that question at length, and marked out a frontier line that involved the inclusion of nearly 2,000,000 Germans in the new Polish state. Mr. Lloyd George set his face resolutely against such a solution. He got the report referred back to the Commission. The Commission deliberated afresh and decided unanimously to abide by its original findings. Still the Prime Minister refused to give way. The French Press attacked him with such vigour that he threatened to have the whole Conference moved to a neutral centre. In the end he gained his point. A new frontier was drawn reducing substantially the German element subjected to Polish rule.

But that resolute insistence on a principle could never be counted on in advance. There were always powerful forces pulling in the other direction. The attack suddenly launched by Lord Northcliffe at the beginning of April had its effect. The Prime Minister hit back with characteristic vigour in a House of Commons speech, but no man in public life has made a more systematic and scientific study of the uses and the possibilities of the Press, and it would be too much to expect that a sudden blast of syndicated

hostility should leave him indifferent. How far that accounted for the vacillation with which the Prime Minister was credited at Paris is a matter for surmise. Again and again he would take a firm stand on some question of importance and then unexpectedly yield his whole ground. His relations with Mr. Bullitt, the American emissary to Russia, and his subsequent statement on that subject in the House of Commons, are now familiar. That does not stand alone. The question of oral negotiations with the Germans at Versailles is a case in point. Mr. Wilson had urged persistently that such negotiations should take place, and he understood Mr. Lloyd George to be in full agreement with him. But at the critical moment the Prime Minister lined up with M. Clemenceau against the proposal and it fell to the ground. Another instance was the issue of the Fiume manifesto. That document was for several days under discussion. M. Clemenceau approved both its terms and the decision to publish it. Mr. Lloyd George unquestionably left in the President's mind the impression that he took the same view. But when the manifesto had been issued, and was being criticised, the Prime Minister took immediate steps to deny the published statement that the President's action had been taken with his concurrence. It may be, no doubt, that these and similar incidents sprang from a genuine misunderstanding. But they were not so explained by those in Paris best qualified to judge.

How far the Prime Minister was guided by Mr.

Balfour in matters falling properly within the Foreign Secretary's sphere can hardly be determined. Mr. Lloyd George's closest associate was Mr. Philip Kerr, formerly editor of the *Round Table,* who had been one of the principal members of the Downing Street garden secretariat since the institution of that body in 1917. Mr. Kerr's wide knowledge of affairs was undoubtedly of the highest value to the Prime Minister, but the tribute paid by Mr. Lloyd George to the Foreign Secretary in the House of Commons after the signature of the German Treaty meant more than mere conventional courtesy. The two Ministers lived under the same roof in the Rue Nitot, a contiguity which gave ample opportunity for those informal consultations which are often the most valuable of all. But it must be remembered that for two years the Foreign Secretary had been deliberately blanketed. Foreign policy was handled either by the Prime Minister himself or by the War Cabinet, of which Mr. Balfour was never a member. It was consequently with something less than a Foreign Secretary's normal authority that he came to Paris, and there was little sign down to the signature of the German treaty (after which he became chief British representative) of his having impressed himself deeply on the Conference. It is, however, just to remember that he was for some time in indifferent health—suffering, according to one popular diagnosis, from "severe sleeping-sickness, broken about mealtimes by acute attacks of insomnia."

Nothing could be more congenial to a mind of the subtlety and dexterity of Mr. Balfour's than the discussions and negotiations incidental to any peace conference, and testimony abounds to the Foreign Secretary's extraordinary capacity for assimilating in five minutes all the relevant facts on some hitherto unfamiliar subject, and armed with that slender equipment presenting a case that left would-be opponents incapable of any effective reply. But dialectics are one thing and convictions another. Mr. Wells asks with regard to a character he models on Mr. Balfour in one of his novels, "Did he really care? Did anything matter to him?" The same question was asked pretty often about Mr. Wells's prototype at Paris, and it never received any assured answer. The Foreign Secretary had his brief, and he handled it with consummate ability. In devising a formula or drafting a memorandum no one could rival him. But it was men who really cared that were needed to make the peace the world waited for.

Such men were not lacking on the British delegation, and the influence of some of them counted for much behind the scenes. Notable among them was General Botha. The late Prime Minister of South Africa was seen little in public. The state of his health prevented him from discharging the mission he was asked to undertake in Poland. But his counsel was constantly being sought by his colleagues, from the Prime Minister downwards, and it told consistently in favour of a peace based on that liberalism and range of vision that

the history of South Africa had so impressively vindicated. If any proof of that were needed it might be found in the story told over the dead Premier's grave by General Smuts, of how he had found written on Botha's agenda paper in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles, on the day the treaty was signed, the words:

> God's judgments will be applied with justice to all peoples under the new sun, and we shall persevere in prayer that they may be applied to mankind in charity and peace and a Christian spirit. To-day I think back May 31st, 1902 (the date of the treaty of Vereeniging).

General Smuts himself made his own views known to the world on the day he set his signature, with profound misgiving, to the Treaty with Germany. The disquiet he voiced then was no revelation to anyone who had been in personal contact with him in Paris. "You know God is writing a very different Treaty to this," he had said to one companion. "Do you think God doesn't see past this Treaty?" he had asked another. "What would you do if you were God Almighty?" he put to a third. He had done his utmost by personal pressure to bring about oral discussions with the German delegates, and the rigour of the final draft of the treaty caused him deep concern.

The South African statesman took an active and prominent part in the work of the League of Nations Commission, and his mission to Hungary

after the Bela Kun revolution was one of the landmarks of the Conference. If the advice he proffered on his return to Paris had been taken the difficulties of the Allies and the distresses of Hungary might have been materially diminished.

Among the other Dominion delegates Sir Robert Borden carried considerable weight—he took Mr. Balfour's place more than once in the Council of Foreign Ministers—and Mr. W. M. Hughes, in spite of the high estimate formed of his abilities by persons who watched him closely, comparatively little. His hostility to the proposed Japanese amendment to the League Covenant on the subject of racial equality was the main cause of the unfortunate defeat of that proposal.

There remains, among the influences that determined British policy at Paris, Lord Robert Cecil. Though neither a plenipotentiary nor even a Minister, Lord Robert made himself felt in a remarkable degree as Chairman of the Supreme Economic Council and the moving spirit on the League of Nations Commission. The work of those bodies absorbed him to the exclusion of all other activities, but his general attitude was well understood, and backed by his personality and the respect he commanded among delegates of all nations it was a factor that unquestionably influenced decisions. Lord Robert has indicated in the House of Commons what features in the treaty he most regrets. With regard to one of them—the indemnity scheme as projected at one stage

of the discussions at Paris—he made a private but explicit protest at the time.

The French delegation summed itself up to all outward appearance in the single figure of M. Clemenceau. The President of the Council held a remarkable position in France. While his recent predecessors had passed swiftly across the stage and vanished from office, he had stood his ground against all attack for more than fifteen months. A defender of the capital in 1870, he had been the soul of the national resistance through the perils of 1914, and at seventy-seven, in spite of an assassin's attack that struck him down in the middle of the Conference and left him to carry to the grave a bullet between his shoulders, he yielded to no member of his own or any other delegation in vigour or capacity for work.

As chairman of the Conference M. Clemenceau distinguished himself by an autocracy sufficiently rigorous to be effective and sufficiently benevolent to cause little offence. His conduct of the Plenary Session at which the League of Nations Covenant was adopted illustrated the double exercise of that quality to perfection. As representative of France on the Council of Ten, and later on the Council of Four, he had the reputation, particularly in the early weeks of the Conference, of an immovable stonewaller prepared to stand for the claims of France against all opposition. Time after time he was compelled by the sheer weight of the argu-

ments against him to yield some few inches of ground, but by the next morning he could regularly be counted on to be back in the old position, ready to contest the whole issue again from its genesis.

But M. Clemenceau must be judged in the light of the circumstances that determined his action. He was there as the representative of France—a France which knew perfectly well what it wanted and relied on the President of the Council to obtain it. He was an intensely popular figure, but the nation was with him only so long as he stood for the national claims. His position in the Chamber was far from secure, and a false move at the Peace Conference might mean his political downfall. What was more, he had an election before him, and though he desired no new lease of power for himself he owed it to his colleagues to retain the confidence of the electors in his administration to the last.

Another force the President of the Council had to consider was Marshal Foch. The Allied Commander-in-Chief stood frankly for a soldier's peace. What he cared for was material safeguards, strategic frontiers, buffer states, the occupation of enemy territory. If General and Minister had been at one in their fight for the peace as they had been in their fight for victory in the war they would have made a formidable combination. But traditionally and temperamentally the two men had little in common. Foch was a devout Catholic and a clerical in politics. Clemen-

ceau was an agnostic and a radical. The soldier's peace terms were not the statesman's. Marshal Foch wanted an indefinite occupation of the left bank of the Rhine. That demand was not sustained by the French delegation. He was bitterly opposed to the proposal for a supreme civilian administration of the occupied territory. M. Clemenceau, as a member of the Council of Four, accepted that proposal without serious demur. At a secret Plenary Session of May 6th, the reply of the President of the Council to a protest by Marshal Foch at the inadequacy of the military guarantees very considerably impressed the delegates who heard it.

None the less, M. Clemenceau was essentially an apostle of the old order in international politics. He was well enough content with the Fourteen Points and the League of Nations so long as they were superadded to the material guarantees he demanded, not substituted for them. The story of his solemn assurance to his colleagues that "Every night when I go to bed I raise my hands and say 'Georges Clemenceau, tu crois en la Ligue des Nations,' and every morning when I get up I raise my hands and recite my new creed," bears all the marks of authenticity on its face. But it was the French Premier's fundamental, not his formal, beliefs that determined his attitude throughout the negotiations. He was fighting for the liberation of France from the menace of a generation, and he claimed, in conversation with a group of Deputies who waited on him in May,

that he had secured the peace that he wanted. Behind M. Clemenceau, moreover, there was always the elusive figure of M. Mandel, his chef du cabinet. M. Mandel was understood to interest himself more in home than foreign affairs, and exactly how far he influenced his chief no one was prepared to estimate, but so far as he concerned himself with the Peace it was certainly to secure that it should be a French peace, not a Wilson peace.

Some account must be taken of two other members of the French delegation, M. Stephen Pichon and M. André Tardieu. M. Pichon, as Foreign Secretary, took his part in pressing France's territorial claims, and he was one of the protagonists in the agitation for an aggressive Allied policy in Russia. But in ability and influence he was overshadowed by M. Tardieu. A former editor of the *Temps*, M. Tardieu had acted during the war as special commissioner of France in the United States, and the political prophets marked him down with unanimity as a Prime Minister of the immediate future. He was known to the public during the Conference mainly as one of the authors (with Mr. Headlam-Morley and Dr. Haskins) of the Saar Valley settlement, but his influence, which expressed itself through various newspapers as well as through personal contacts, was pervasive.

Of the representatives of the two other major nations, the Italians were the more prominent. Their two principal delegates down to the signa-

ture of the German Treaty were Signor Orlando and Baron Sonnino,—the latter of whom claimed the distinction of being the only Foreign Secretary in Europe who was a baptised member of the Church of England. Of the two Baron Sonnino was by far the more forceful character. A confessed Imperialist, he was a constant stimulus in the rear of his Prime Minister. Signor Orlando, a college professor himself, is temperamentally a warm admirer of President Wilson and his principles. But he had a thankless rôle to play at the Conference. His political position at home was precarious. Italy's economic situation was deplorable and revolution was openly talked of. Demobilisation was held up because the Government preferred to have the men under authority and not released to agitate. Feeling was running high against the Southern Slavs. Italy had counted on substantial salvage for herself out of the wreck of the Austrian Empire, and when all the most eligible territory became the property of Allies, through the recognition of the State of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, the blow to Italian ambitions was severe. In retiring from the Council of Four on the day a Southern Slav delegation was heard, on the ground that he could not meet "the enemy" face to face, Signor Orlando was faithfully voicing the antagonism of the majority of his countrymen. With such influences pressing in on him from different sides the Italian Prime Minister had a difficult course to shape. Something too must be ascribed to his southern blood,—he

is a native of Sicily,—as for example when he requested that a meeting of the Council of Four which he attended after the issue of the Fiume manifesto might be held at Mr. Lloyd George's house instead of at President Wilson's, "as he preferred to meet on neutral territory."

There remain the Japanese, who call for less extended mention. They had few direct interests at stake, but on those they had—Shantung, certain Pacific Islands, certain cables, and the declaration of racial equality under the League of Nations—they stood like granite. There was something almost sinister in their habitual silence. Sir William Orpen, in a portrait he painted of Marquis Saionzi during the Conference, concentrated with remarkable effect the inscrutability that attached to them. They would sit through a discussion never speaking a word, faces set like masks, a riddle unreadable, challenging by their very reticence. What lay behind it all? What did they really think of the Conference? How much did they care for the League of Nations? How far did they mean business over the international labour charter? No man could tell. But it is bare justice to give any nation credit for good intentions till it has convicted itself of bad—and Japan's outward deportment has in the main been unexceptionable, though in the matter of Korea and Shantung it is high time a damaged reputation was rehabilitated.

Two other personal influences at the Conference must be noted—M. Vénisélos and Mr. Herbert

Hoover. Far too little use was made of the Greek Prime Minister. He argued the case of his country before the Greek Commission and the Council of Four with a persuasiveness that secured a disturbingly complete recognition of his claims, and he did valuable service on the League of Nations Commission. But the radically unsound system of valuing men by nationality instead of personality could find no greater condemnation than is supplied by the fact that on neither of the two principal deliberative bodies, the Council of Four Premiers or the Council of Five Foreign Ministers, could use be found for the talents of perhaps the ablest statesman in Europe.

As for Mr. Hoover, he had no place in the Conference proper at all, though the Council of Five had the wisdom to send him on a special mission to Austria and Hungary after the Rumanian seizure of Buda-Pesth in August. For while the work of the Conference was deliberative and legislative Mr. Hoover's was purely economic. The Conference indeed thwarted his efforts much more than it assisted them, by its insistence on the maintenance of the blockade of Germany, a policy he condemned in season and out of season. But the Director-General of Allied Relief personified the one great humane influence at Paris. The foremost soldiers of the world had laid in carnage the foundations of victory. The foremost statesmen of the world were spelling out their paper peace. He and the men he gathered round him were keeping dying children from death and lifting a corner

at least of the cloud of misery and suffering that weighed down upon Europe. In some elusive, intangible way the knowledge of the work he was doing shot like a purifying ray through the fog that enveloped the endeavours and the impotence of the Conference.

THE NEW GERMANY.

Chapter VI

NEW MAPS FOR OLD

ONE of the chief tasks of the Conference was to make new maps. The face of Europe and Asia was to be changed. Everyone who was anyone wanted something different. France wanted Alsace-Lorraine and the Saar Valley and the left bank of the Rhine and Syria and part of the Cameroons; Great Britain wanted Mesopotamia and German East Africa and South-west Africa and some South Pacific Islands and possibly Palestine, and ought to have wanted a regularised title to Egypt; Italy wanted the Trentino and Trieste and the Tyrol and Dalmatia and Fiume and parts of Albania and a foothold at Adalia; Japan wanted Shantung and some North Pacific Islands; Greece wanted extensions in Epirus and Macedonia and the return of the Dodecanese and considerable holdings round Smyrna; Belgium wanted parts of German East Africa and various concessions at the expense of Holland; Poland wanted independence; so did Czecho-Slovakia and Jugo-Slavia and the border states of Russia; Rumania wanted Transylvania and Bessarabia. America, grotesquely unversed in the enterprising diplomacy of Europe, wanted nothing at all.

Chapter VI

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Claims of that order threw into the limelight one definite principle—the principle of acquisition. Quite a lot might be said for and against that, but at any rate it was not the principle laid down in President Wilson's Fourteen Points and his subsequent addresses. What students of those addresses had a right to look for when the Conference opened was a rearrangement of the map of the world determined by one principle above any other—the right of peoples to choose their own governors and governments. The world was for the first time to be, so to speak, town-planned, with regard to no consideration whatever but the soundness and justice of the plan. Imperialist desires and designs were irrelevant. The world had risen to a level above the old bad order to which they essentially belonged.

Those hopes and beliefs did not survive many days of the Conference. The principles on which they rested were not banished from the Council chamber. President Wilson saw to that, if no one else did. But instead of the general and tacit acceptance to which they were entitled they gained merely a theoretical recognition, except at moments when some delegate suddenly invoked them as serviceable supports to an argument based essentially on quite different and quite material considerations. The Conference in short was a battle-ground on which the new conflicted with the old. The contest swayed doubtfully, and each in turn was uppermost. On balance it can hardly be claimed that the victory was with the new.

But taking the territorial claims as they were, and varying as they did in their intrinsic justice and the nature of the prizes claimed, it is possible to disengage one or two main principles which affected most or all of them generally. One was the theory of mandates under the League of Nations. By that system much of the territory previously held by Germans or Turks was to form a trust, under the guardianship of one or other of the Allied Powers acting as agent of the League. The theory is more fully discussed in another chapter.* It is enough to say here that while the principle of mandate was defined in the Covenant of the League of Nations the vital question of the actual allocation of the mandates was never publicly discussed. The task should unquestionably have fallen to the League itself if the League had been ready to act. As it was the mandates were shared out among the major Allies by a Council on which only those major Allies were represented. Belgium, it is true, is to hold part of what was once German East Africa under this tenure, but that is the result of a private arrangement with Great Britain, to whom the territory in question was in the first instance allotted. Altogether the resemblance between the old theory of protectorate and the new theory of mandate, as the latter habitually figured in the Paris discussions, is lamentably close. It may be added that it is further heightened by the decision of the British Government to take powers to institute

* Chapter IX.

preferential tariff relations with the territories it holds under mandate.

A second factor of importance was the considered policy of France in regard to the new map of Europe. France, as has been said, was dominated by an insistent fear of renewed German aggression. That fear was intelligible viewed in relation to the past, but groundless viewed in relation to the changes effected by the war. But there it was, and it determined the whole attitude of France at the Conference. She demanded two kinds of security. One was the transfer to herself of a large part of Germany's mineral resources—the raw material of her munitions—and the acquisition of a strategic frontier on the Rhine. The other was the creation of any counterpoise to the power of Germany it might be possible to evolve in Eastern Europe. Russia was gone. The old alliance that had formed one side of the balance of power in Europe had dissolved for ever, unless Koltchak or Denikin could achieve the unexpected and establish himself permanently at Moscow. It remained therefore to make the best of the smaller states. An enlarged Poland and an enlarged Rumania would between them stretch from the Baltic to the Black Sea, capable at once of forming a *cordon sanitaire* against Russian Bolshevism and of commanding the respect of Germany sufficiently to restrain her from any adventures in the west. For that purpose Poland mattered most. The more powerful Poland could be made the better for France. Polish claims

should never fail for lack of French support. Polish troops were enlisted and equipped in France, and an Allied military officer of high rank had cause to comment in a private report on the activity in Poland of French officers under whose influence a Polish army on a scale altogether in excess of the defensive needs of the country was being built up.

There was a certain relationship between the policy of France and the policy of Italy. Considerable changes in Italy's frontiers were inevitable. Her claim to the Italia Irredenta of the Trentino and part or all of the Pola peninsula was incontestable, though there were good reasons for preferring the solution of a free port at Trieste. But Italy was by no means satisfied with Italia Irredenta. Like France she thought in terms of strategy. The Austrian navy was dead. A Jugo-Slav navy had not been born, and unless the League of Nations broke down altogether it never would be. But that did not prevent Italy from claiming the mastery of the Adriatic and standing out for all and more than all the coast area allotted to her by the Treaty of London in 1915.

Imperialism of that order, since it could find no moral justification, had to seek what support it could in other fields. The natural arrangement was for Italy to favour French claims on the Rhine in return for French favour for Italian claims on the Adriatic. To be just to M. Clemenceau and Signor Orlando, there was no proof of any kind

of a deal between them personally, but neither could be altogether unaffected by the atmosphere created by such assertions as this from the *Matin* (to take one example out of many) in regard to Italy's demands under the Treaty of London:—"France united to Italy by an alliance which must at all costs become permanent can make no opposition to these claims. We and Italy are likely to find ourselves the only two Continental powers called on to face the dangers that are hatching in Central Europe—whether those dangers in the future take the name of Nationalism, Thirst for Revenge, or Bolshevism. We can propose nothing that should weaken the position of Italy." So much for Fourteen Point principles.

Italy's claims, in point of fact, led to the one spectacular crisis of the Conference. The secret treaty of London, signed by Great Britain, France and Russia at a time when it was held that Italy's participation on the side of the Allies must be secured at all costs, gave the Italians the whole of the Dalmatian coast of the Adriatic, but not the town of Fiume. That was in 1915. But the war having been won Italy was not content even with what the Treaty of London gave her. Having secured large tracts of Jugo-Slav territory by the treaty in violation of the principle of self-determination, she proceeded with laudable business acumen to claim Fiume in virtue of the principle of self-determination. The controversy dominated the Conference from the first. It did not affect the German treaty at all, or for that

THE NEW AUSTRIA.

matter the Austrian treaty either, since all that was in question was the division of spoils which the conquered nation would have to surrender in any case, no matter what their final disposition. But the Italians were fully alive to the fact that the best means of bringing pressure on the Allies in the matter of Fiume was by a threat to refuse to sign the German treaty unless their desires were satisfied. Hence the emergence of the question in the first month of the Conference.

To and fro the battle swayed for weeks. The propagandists on both sides worked themselves to the edge of the grave. The air was thick with statistics. The population of Fiume was so much. Out of that so much was Italian. On the contrary so much of it was Jugo-Slav, and even the Italian-speaking did not want Italian rule. The French Press was captured almost solid for Italy, and there were plenty of fictitious or veracious stories to show the reason why. According to one, which may be taken or left as individual judgment dictates, a representative of a certain highly reputable organ called on a leading Jugo-Slav delegate. "I understand," he said, "you have been complaining of the attitude of my paper over Fiume." The plenipotentiary admitted that he had expressed some surprise at the journal's sudden abandonment of its habitual impartiality. "Well," replied the other with a shrug of the shoulders, "you know the terms." "The terms?" "Yes, 125,000 francs." "Ah," replied the diplomatist, rising genially to the occasion,

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"est-ce que c'est un abonnement? Par semaine, ou par mois, ou par an?" The Jugo-Slavs on their side showed equal enterprise. The Italians could teach them nothing in the matter of statistics. One cheering contribution to the exhibits in the case, circulated in the form of a picture post-card, was the reproduction of a memorial plaque set up by the grateful (and alleged Italian) municipality of Fiume in 1915, in honour of an intrepid Austrian aviator who had brought down the Italian airship Citta di Ferrara in flames close to the town.

So matters drifted on till late in April. Mr. Lloyd George and M. Clemenceau had their hands tied by the Treaty of London, but they were at least free to emphasise the folly, from Italy's own point of view, of the intractable attitude her representatives had seen fit to adopt. Col. House, who occupied three adjoining rooms at the Hotel Crillon, invited the rival delegates to meet him simultaneously. Each deputation was closeted with American experts in a room at either end of the suite, while Col. House, established in the middle room, moved to and fro endeavouring to persuade the antagonists to join him round a table. He never succeeded.

President Wilson himself, in the language of his country, stood pat. He at least was not bound by the Treaty of London, in which America had no part. His view was that Italy, having accepted the principles of the Fourteen Points on November 5th, was under a moral obligation to abandon

all claims, even under the Treaty of London, that conflicted with those principles. If Italy had been prepared to yield part of the Dalmatian coast and thus give Jugo-Slavia an outlet to the sea, he might have adopted a different attitude on Fiume. But he had no idea of letting the Jugo-Slavs be boxed in without a port. Occasionally there were rumours that a compromise had been effected. That, for example, was the conclusion to be drawn from a two-column heading which appeared in a Paris paper of April 23rd,

ADRIATIC QUESTION SETTLED.

ITALY TO HAVE ——— AND THE JUGO-SLAVS THE HINTERLAND AND THE ——— OF ———, followed by a large blank space, and the melancholy legend, "One hundred and twenty lines censored." In point of fact the compromise never materialised.

President Wilson now became the arch-enemy. When he went to Italy in January they burned candles before his portrait. In April they would cheerfully have burned the portrait's original. An instructive anecdote drifted back to Paris of a fervid Italian orator who was discoursing on the past glories of his country. He spoke of Tasso (loud cheers), Dante (loud cheers) Galileo (loud cheers), and finally Cristoforo Colombo (dead silence broken by a few hisses).

In the last week of April, Mr. Wilson acted. Conference delays had long become a scandal and Italy's obduracy could be allowed to impede progress no longer. On the Sunday of that week the President presented what was virtually an ulti-

matum in the course of the discussion on the Council of Four. He produced a plain statement on the whole controversy and announced his intention of issuing it if the difficulty was not rapidly resolved. Signor Orlando wept. The matter was dropped for that sitting, and on the Monday morning, Mr. Wilson, having said what he had to say, did not attend the council. In the afternoon, however, he returned, and the Council sat as eight, the four Foreign Ministers joining the President and the three Premiers. The deadlock continued. On the Tuesday, the Four met as three, Signor Orlando having withdrawn and announced his refusal to return till the Fiume question was settled in Italy's favour. He remained away all Tuesday. On that day M. Clemenceau remarked to President Wilson that there was nothing to be gained by holding back his manifesto longer. It was understood that Mr. Lloyd George took the same view, but he subsequently indicated that was not so. On Wednesday morning, Signor Orlando was still absent. On Wednesday afternoon, President Wilson issued his statement.

That was the breaking of the storm. The Italians countered with an immediate declaration of their withdrawal from the Conference. Efforts were made to heal the breach, but in vain. On Thursday afternoon, after giving out a statement in reply to the President, Signor Orlando had a last meeting with his colleagues on the Council of Four at Mr. Lloyd George's house—"neutral ter-

ritory''—and the same evening he left Paris for Rome.

He took with him a document of considerable interest which has never been published. Mr. Lloyd George and M. Clemenceau could not put their names to President Wilson's memorandum for obvious reasons, but they embodied their own views in a statement, the actual authorship of which was attributed to Mr. Balfour, which was to have been published simultaneously with or immediately after the President's manifesto. That course in the end was not followed. Instead, the document was handed to Signor Orlando, with the intimation that he was free to make what use of it he thought fit. The Italian Prime Minister apparently decided that it was little calculated to strengthen his case, and neither he nor anyone else has given any public indication of its contents.

The crisis was viewed by the remaining Allies with relative equanimity. Something had to be done to bring the interminable discussions to an end, and a permanent rupture between Italy and the Allies was, for all her indignation, out of the question. Economically Italy's very existence depended on England and America. She got her coal and her shipping from the one and her corn and her credit from the other. There was no need for the Allies to draw attention to that fundamental fact. Italy was in no danger of forgetting it.

But overheated emotions had to cool down before the old relations could be resumed. Signor Orlando was able to appeal to national *amour propre,* and the more so since the Fiume agitation had been worked up by the Press and public speeches till it made of a third rate port an index of the rise or fall of Italy.

The Prime Minister got a practically solid vote of his Parliament behind him. That was on April 29th. On May 4th, the Three sent a formal invitation to the Italians to come back. On May 6th, they left Rome for Paris. What had happened during their absence was significant. The Council of Three went on with its business. The Treaty was virtually ready for presentation to the Germans. Should it be held up while the Italian difficulty was solved? The Three decided it should not. They decided something else of importance. At six-thirty one evening the official drafters received instructions to go through the Treaty and remove Italy's name wherever it occurred. The Covenant of the League of Nations was treated in the same way, Italy being transferred from the list of original members to the list of neutrals who would be asked to join immediately. At eight-thirty the previous instruction was cancelled, news having arrived that the Italians were coming back.

The Treaty was to be presented to the Germans on Thursday, May 8th. The Italian delegates were to reach Paris early on Wednesday, which would give them time for a final discussion with

the Council of Three before a decisive step was taken. But on arriving at the Gare de Lyons, Signor Orlando was informed that the ceremony had been advanced by twenty-four hours and was fixed for that afternoon at three. He had just comfortable time to get lunch and a change of clothes before setting out for the ceremony at the Trianon Palace Hotel, at Versailles. Among other changes effected during (and as the result of) his absence a clause had been inserted providing that ratification by any three of the Principal Allied and Associated Powers, in addition to Germany, should be sufficient to bring the treaty into force.

So ended the Fiume crisis. If I seem to have given undue space describing its various phases it has to be remembered that in an account of the Peace Conference the measure of events is not their intrinsic importance, but the importance they assumed at Paris. And as for Fiume it was a continual obsession. It was with us waking and sleeping, eating and drinking, till President Wilson took the decisive step and banished the disturbance from the board. Even so no settlement was reached. As I write D'Annunzio is still in possession of the town, seized in his lawless raid, and neither Allies nor Italians show signs of dislodging him.

Next in importance to the Fiume crisis was the Shantung crisis, which came to a head during the ten days the Italians were absent from Paris. The two controversies resembled each other in the

fact that both sprang from secret treaties to which America was not a signatory, and that in each case the threat of withdrawal from the Conference was used as a weapon by the recalcitrant party. They differed in the important fact that while the Allies had a powerful economic hold over Italy they had none whatever over Japan. The problem moreover had been complicated at the outset by a previous decision of the Conference. Japan wanted two things at Paris. One was the inclusion in the League of Nations Covenant of a declaration of racial equality, the other the acknowledgment of Japan's succession to German rights in Shantung. Having been refused the one by the League of Nations Commission she was so much the more uncompromising in her insistence on the other. "Loss of face" is a serious matter to Oriental nations, and the Japanese delegates were not prepared to go back to their homes with the discredit of a double defeat upon them. It is true that Japan had already been accorded by her recognition as one of the five major Powers of the Alliance a position such as she had never enjoyed in world politics, but that had by this time become a thing taken for granted and aroused no feelings of particular appreciation in Japanese minds.

The facts about Shantung are simple. Japan, which had taken a leading part in the capture of the German settlement of Tsingtao, on the coast of Shantung, in 1914, had claimed the succession to all German rights in China. In 1917, Great

Britain, France, Russia and Italy had bound themselves by a secret agreement to support that claim at the Peace Conference. Not only was America not bound by the engagement, but President Wilson, as he told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, was not even aware of its existence till after the Peace Conference had begun. But there it was on record. What was more, China had accepted the situation in a treaty signed under duress in 1915, and had re-affirmed that acceptance in 1918. All this meant a settlement in flat defiance of the principles on which the armistice was signed, and China demanded that the Conference should declare the treaty she had signed in 1915—under threat of an ultimatum—invalid, and transfer German rights in Shantung to the government at Peking, not to that of Tokio.

The hands of Mr. Lloyd George and M. Clemenceau were tied by the secret agreement of 1917. Signor Orlando would have been in the same position if he had been present at the discussions. Mr. Wilson had to stand for the Fourteen Points alone. Japan made it known that if her claim was rejected she would leave the Conference. That might have been bluff. Mr. Lansing, who was not personally engaged in the negotiations, believed it was. President Wilson, who had the whole thing in his hands, was convinced that Japan meant what she said. Italy was at that moment an absentee, and nothing was known of her return. Another defection might have broken up the Conference. More than that, it would have

meant the emancipation of Japan from all the obligations of the Treaty and all the restraints attaching to membership of the League of Nations. It would have established an aggressive and embittered enemy within a day's steaming of the seaboard of a defenceless China. It would have dispelled finally all hope of settling by agreement the variety of delicate questions in which Japan was an interested party. What the Japanese delegates offered was to hand back to China full sovereignty over the surrendered portions of Shantung, except for a small area to be set apart as the site of an international settlement, retaining however economic rights resembling in character but exceeding in scale those enjoyed by other powers elsewhere in China.

Was it better to accept that offer, trusting to the League of Nations in the future to set wrong right, or to face the prospect of Japan's retiring altogether from the Conference? President Wilson, on whom circumstances had cast an undue and unwelcome burden of decision, chose the former alternative. The undertaking was not given in writing, but the oral pledges of Japan's representatives were included in the procès verbal in which the decisions of the Council of Four were at this time regularly embodied. The settlement aroused such hostility in China that the Chinese plenipotentiaries refused to sign the Peace Treaty at all. In America, where friendship for China and antagonism to Japan is traditional, the Shantung clauses of the Treaty have had to stand heav-

ier fire than any others. Three of the five American delegates at Paris, Mr. Lansing, Mr. Henry White and General Bliss, had sent the President a memorandum urging the claims of China. President Wilson admitted frankly to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that he liked the solution as little as anyone, but the past having been prejudiced as it was this particular evil was the least of the variety of evils between which it was necessary to choose.

France's claims, apart from the Cameroons, on which there was no controversy, and Syria, the settlement of which dragged on inconclusively month after month, were concerned exclusively with her Eastern frontier. She wanted Alsace-Lorraine, she wanted the Saar Valley, she wanted the left bank of the Rhine. Alsace-Lorraine fell to her without serious discussion. The Radicals of Great Britain and France urged that the transfer should be regularised by taking a plebiscite of the inhabitants, but it could be argued with reason that the cession was provided for in the eighth of the Fourteen Points,* which Germany had accepted as the basis of peace.

The Saar Valley and the left bank of the Rhine were in a different category. There could be no pretence that the inhabitants of either desired annexation by France. Various pretexts were put forward, but the truth was at bottom plain enough.

* "The wrong done to France in the matter of Alsace-Lorraine, which has unsettled the Peace of the World for fifty years, should be righted."

France wanted the Saar Valley for the sake of its coal (this coal rather than any other coal on account of its contiguity to the Lorraine ironfields) and the left bank of the Rhine for purposes of military defence. Foch and the soldiers urged the latter claim, the business men and Imperialists the former. In the plea that France was entitled to supplies of Saar Valley coal while the mines injured by the Germans in her northern coal fields were out of action everyone concurred. It was quite another matter when France contended that that involved a change in the political status of the Saar Valley population. The solution finally reached represented not the ideal settlement but the compromise to which the advocates of annexation were forced back, after the discussion had swayed to and fro for a month or more at Paris. It embodied a fundamental injustice,—the political severance, even though only temporary, of a German population from Germany. On the other hand the régime instituted, if not thus prejudiced at the outset, would have had much to recommend it. The Saar population, governed under the League of Nations by a Board of five commissioners, of whom one is to represent the inhabitants and only one can be French, and freed from all military service and all taxation except for local purposes, will have no great reason for discontent. At the end of fifteen years it will have the right to vote for return to Germany, for union with France, or for the perpetuation of its existing status. The decision that the Saar coal

shall be the absolute property of France, and must be bought back by the Germans if the plebiscite in fifteen years' time goes in their favour, falls in reality under the head of indemnity and not of territorial resettlement.

The left bank of the Rhine controversy centred largely, as has been said, round France's demand for a new defensive frontier. Marshal Foch urged that demand insistently. President Wilson and Mr. Lloyd George were opposed to it so far as it involved annexation, and the Liberal elements in France itself were alarmed at the prospect of creating a new Alsace-Lorraine. But the Liberal elements in France are not well represented in the Paris press, and papers like the *Echo de Paris* clamoured incessantly for a military frontier on the Rhine. The demilitarisation of the left bank was generally approved, and France's Allies were quite ready to discuss seriously the demand for a prolonged occupation as a guarantee of the discharge of treaty obligations. But Marshal Foch fought to the death for his proposals, and at the critical moment Lord Northcliffe threw in his battalions on the side of militarist imperialism, publishing in the *Daily Mail* a full-dress interview with the Commander-in-Chief, in which the whole array of arguments for the repudiation of the principle of self-determination in the interests of the defence of France were staged with characteristic skill. The interview, curiously enough, was not printed in the Paris *Daily Mail* or any other French paper, owing to

restrictions, dating back to the Boulanger episode, on the publication of the views of serving officers. Various references to the interview were attempted but in every case they were rigorously censored.

The contest on the Council of Four was warmer, and the same time sooner over, than was generally realised. To dispassionate observers indeed the French position seemed so untenable that it was difficult to suppose it would be seriously considered. But Marshal Foch put in memorandum after memorandum, and so severe did the tension become that President Wilson and Mr. Lloyd George were constrained to agree to a compromise which the former at least must have found distasteful in the extreme. The proper defence of France was the League of Nations. But France was not content to trust to the League, and pointed out with some justice that the League was not yet in being. To meet her objections Great Britain and America agreed to accept forthwith in regard to France the obligations that would fall on them as members of the League when the League actually came into operation. That offer was made on March 14th, the day of President Wilson's return to Paris after his flying visit to America. It was accepted by France as the price of the abandonment of the Foch proposals, and on the day of the presentation of the Treaty to the Germans it was announced that President Wilson and Mr. Lloyd George had pledged themselves to propose to the American Senate and the British

Parliament respectively "an engagement subject to the League of Nations to go immediately to the assistance of France in the case of an unprovoked attack by Germany." In spite of the saving clause "subject to the League of Nations" the agreement is inevitably damaging to the prestige of the League, and its inherent dangers were illustrated by the demand immediately voiced in various quarters in France that both Italy and Belgium should be brought into the new alliance. So hard does the Balance of Power doctrine die.

There was still one more contest to come over the Rhine territory. Under the Treaty the Allies took power to occupy the left bank of the river for fifteen years as guarantee of the payment of the indemnity, and to extend that period at will in the event of Germany's failure to discharge her obligations. The question of the administration of that area during occupation had to be settled. Marshal Foch stood out for a fully developed military régime, and a singularly uncompromising French memorandum was drawn up in defence of that thesis. General Tasker Bliss, the military member of the American Peace Delegation, who had just returned to Paris from the Rhine, immediately replied with an equally strong memorandum urging the establishment of a supreme civil control. This broadly represented the British view also. The question was referred to a committee, on which Lord Robert Cecil was the British member and Mr. J. W. Davis, the American Ambassador in London, represented the

United States. Marshal Foch stated his case in person, but the committee reported against him and the Council of Four adopted its recommendations, which provided for the administration of the occupied area by a Supreme Rhineland Commission of five civilian members, with whom final executive authority would rest. That solution was naturally not popular in French military circles and there was more than a suspicion that Dr. Dorten's attempt to form a semi-independent Rhineland Republic a month or so later had the unofficial backing of various French officers as well as of various French clericals.

To the list of territorial controversies of the first order must be added the question of the boundaries of Poland, to which reference has already been made. That problem produced a slight change of orientation among members of the Council of Four. As a rule where German interests were concerned M. Clemenceau might be described as standing well to the right, President Wilson well to the left, and Mr. Lloyd George somewhere between the two. On Poland the relationships shifted. France's interest in that country has already been indicated. Mr. Wilson too had his reasons for sympathy with the Poles. There is a large Polish population in the United States, and one of the Fourteen Points was devoted exclusively to the vindication of Poland's claims. He appeared quite content to accept the report of the Polish Commission, so delimiting the "corridor" to Dantzig as to include two mil-

lion Germans in Poland, as well as cutting off East Prussia from geographical connection with Germany altogether. It was Mr. Lloyd George who fought that battle and won it. No ideal solution was possible. The severance of East Prussia was the inevitable result of the connection of Poland with the sea. All that could be done—and that was done—was to secure for Germany free transit rights over the strip of Polish territory that separated West Prussia from East. Round Dantzig a fierce controversy centred. Should the predestined port of Poland remain German? Should a town 95 per cent. German be handed over to Poles? Statistics hurtled through the air. The Poles were on the spot to state their case in person, the Germans, of course, were not, but there were plenty of devotees of self-determination to challenge the Polish arguments. In the end Mr. Lloyd George got his way over the corridor, and Dantzig was made nominally a free city, though that concession was hedged about with so many qualifications as to be hardly worth the breath expended in arguing for it.

All round the Polish frontier there was controversy, as to Lithuania, as to the Ukraine, as to the notorious Teschen, where coal mines and a railway were in dispute. The Teschen discussions trailed on till the middle of September, when it was decided to cut the knot by ordering a plebiscite of the inhabitants. Polish and Czecho-Slovak propagandists had argued their claims

threadbare for six months, and armed affrays between soldiers of the two nations in Teschen itself had been numerous. A plebiscite was also decided on in Upper Silesia, largely on the initiative of Mr. Lloyd George, who insisted that the Polish claims to that area should be submitted to the decision of the inhabitants.

The minor changes in the map are too numerous to trace, but there was one to which a peculiar, if adventitious, interest attached. There was no more striking figure in Paris at a certain stage of the Conference than the Emir Feisal, son of the King of the Hedjaz. I picture him as I saw him one afternoon pacing up and down the great lounge of the Hotel Majestic in company with his inseparable attaché, Col. Lawrence, the remarkable young Oxford don, who, turning to account the knowledge of Arabic he had acquired in exploring for manuscripts, had succeeded in bringing the ruler of the Hedjaz and all the troops he controlled into the war on the British side against the Turks. Col. Lawrence is a few years over thirty and looks less. He stands about five feet six. The Emir Feisal must be a good six inches taller and his remarkable golden headdress, crowning a figure already made notable by the rich black beard and the flowing robe, heightened still further the contrast between the two companions. What the Emir wanted at Paris was the recognition of the Hedjaz. He got it, and signed the Treaty at Versailles as the representative of an independent monarch. That had

already been conceded by a secret agreement of 1916, between Great Britain, Russia and France, which gave Great Britain Mesopotamia and France Syria. As to Mesopotamia no question arose, but the disposition of Syria was the subject of endless discussion at the Conference. It was alleged that the inhabitants did not desire the establishment of a French régime. The despatch of a commission of enquiry was decided on, then cancelled, then revived, then cancelled again, till no one knew at any moment whether the latest resolve was that it should go or not go. In the end the appointed British representatives, Sir Henry Macmahon and Dr. D. G. Hogarth, abandoned their proposed journey. The French representatives were never appointed and the Americans, Mr. Charles R. Crane and President King, of Oberlin University, went out alone. The assignation of the Syrian mandate to France was finally agreed to after consultation with Lord Allenby after his return from Palestine and Egypt in September.

The future of Asia Minor, where Greece and Italy had taken the precaution of pegging out their claims by the landing of troops at Smyrna and Adalia respectively, was left in abeyance pending the decision of America as to the acceptance of a mandate for the whole or any part of that section of the former Turkish Empire.

By the end of it all settled frontiers, which the League of Nations undertakes by Article X. of the Covenant to defend against external ag-

gression, and by Article XI. to alter as changing conditions may require, got marked out by the Council of Four, or its successor. The peace of the world in the future may depend very largely on the relative importance the League attaches to the two articles in question. All things in the affairs of men develop and change. The predominance of X., the static, means war. The predominance of XI., the elastic, means justice and peace.

Chapter VII

THE BILL FOR DAMAGES

THE indemnity question was in some respects the storm-centre of the Conference. It was not astonishing that it should be. The war had brought impoverishment on an unprecedented scale on every country, with the possible exception of America and Japan, that had taken part in it, and every nation, again with the possible exception of America and Japan, was animated in varying degree by a desire to recoup itself at Germany's expense for some portion of its losses, and to penalise Germany by the imposition of a drastic indemnity for the ruin she had brought upon the world.

That attitude was intelligible enough. Logically there was no answer to the demand that the guilty author of the war—and no one at Paris was disposed to acquit Germany of any share of the full responsibility for what had happened—should contribute, to the utmost limit of her ability, to the reinstatement of the countries whom the war had driven far towards bankruptcy. The man of average common-sense saw only one term set to the demands of the Allies on Germany, that imposed by the fact that unless she were left some margin of subsistence it would be impossible for

her to restore her industries and make her contribution, whether in the form of indemnity or through the normal channels of trade, to the common wealth of the world. Perhaps it is putting it too high to say that men of average commonsense saw that, for the number who expounded that self-evident doctrine with any constancy was conspicuously scanty. Still smaller was the handful liberal-minded and far-seeing enough to set reconciliation and the restoration of true peace higher than the exaction of the uttermost measure of reparation.

The popular demand, though in its common form it was a demand for the impossible, was intelligible in France if it was intelligible anywhere. For one thing, France needed the indemnity as hardly any other nation needed it. She had neglected culpably to increase her revenue, as it should have been increased, by taxation, staking everything on the hope of liquidating her burden of debt out of payments by Germany. That was the practical side of the question. The psychological counted on the whole for even more. France had suffered from the war as no other of the major Allies had. Her borders had been invaded, her richest provinces had been ravaged, her capital had been under daily fire from long-distance guns as well under nightly attack from Gothas. It was little wonder that France should come to the court of judgment hot with anger and the zeal for retribution. Germany, moreover, had aggravated her offences by every embitterment,

in small matters as well as great, that a primitive and uncomprehending psychology could devise. She not only committed crimes but advertised them. One instance given me by Mr. Hoover will serve as example. In the occupied regions of Belgium and Northern France there were localised two celebrated strains of horses. They had become naturalised in these two districts and the stock of the whole world was replenished from there. When the Germans got possession of the districts in question they carried off every horse into Germany, "and," said Mr. Hoover, "I have in my drawer an advertisement notifying all and sundry that the whole stock of both breeds is now held in Germany and anyone desiring to replenish his stud should apply to such and such an address." That is merely a chance illustration in regard to a small matter of the working of the German mind in great matters. The gutting of the factories at Lille and elsewhere, and the deliberate destruction of blast furnaces even in the last month of German occupation, were other examples of a criminality that made the temper of France what it was.

The attitude of Great Britain was different. Apart from air-raids and an occasional naval dash across the North Sea the war had left the soil of England immune. There was no such stimulus as in France to a demand for retribution. But the British representatives came to the Peace Conference fresh from a General Election in which the cry of "Germany Must Pay" had

turned the votes of some millions of electors who knew as much about Germany's capacity to pay as they knew about the properties of helium. In his Bristol speech in December, Mr. Lloyd George had declared that "we have an absolute right to demand the whole cost of the war from Germany," and that "we propose to demand the whole cost of the war," and had mentioned £24,000,000,000 as a reasonable total for the claim. Other speakers preached from the same text without even the reservations with which the Prime Minister fortified himself. He did indeed regularly invoke the saving formula "up to the full limit of Germany's capacity to pay,"—a qualification amounting to the unimpeachable truism that you could not take from Germany what Germany had not got.

That policy had been far too often and too loudly proclaimed to be jettisoned out of hand as soon as the subject was approached in earnest at Paris. The Prime Minister was indeed at considerable pains to damp down the expectations his own utterances had excited, but it was not till comparatively late in the Conference that that basis of settlement was frankly abandoned. In the House of Commons questions on the subject were persistent, and the Government spokesmen made zealous endeavours to provide replies to suit every taste. Mr. Bonar Law's declaration of February 13th, for example, to the effect that "the British delegates on the Commission (on Repa-

ration) are definitely instructed to claim an indemnity which will include the cost of the war as well as damage actually inflicted," may be profitably compared with Mr. Bonar Law's declaration of March 17th that "our policy is not and never has been to demand from Germany what we know under any circumstances Germany cannot pay."

It remains to add a word on America. The United States Government had nothing to claim from Germany. Whatever damage America had sustained by sunk ships and the like had been more than set off by her seizures of German property on the declaration of war between the two countries. In any case a different spirit on the indemnity question prevailed among the American delegates at Paris from that animating most of the British and French, and American influence was consistently directed towards modifying the rigour and the impracticability of the financial terms of the Treaty.

Theoretically the solution of the indemnity problem should have been relatively simple. The Fourteen Points, on the basis of which the Allies had undertaken to make peace, spoke of the "restoration" of the occupied territories, and in the vital Note of November 5th, a specific interpretation of what the Allies understood by restoration was conveyed to the Germans. The passage in the Allied memorandum bearing on this point was as follows:—

"In the conditions of peace laid down in his Address to Congress of January 8th, 1918, the President declared that the invaded territories must be restored as well as evacuated and freed, and the Allied Governments feel that no doubt ought to be allowed to exist as to what this provision implies.

"By it they understand that compensation will be made by Germany for all damage done to the civilian population of the Allies and their property by the aggression of Germany by land, by sea and from the air."

That definition was made gratuitously by the Allies. They need not have made it. They might have chosen some more comprehensive formula. But in point of fact they chose this formula, and having chosen it they were in the opinion of most honourable men under some obligation to abide by it.

The Allies in Council at Paris declined, however, to consider themselves bound at all. Prominent English and French politicians had declared that Germany was liable for the whole cost of the war, and that they were out to get all they could; and it was with those declarations fresh in memory that the negotiations at Paris opened. In actual fact the whole question was largely academic. If payments falling within the four corners of the November 5th definition are regarded for the sake of distinction as reparation, and those falling outside them as indemnity, it was certain that

when reparation had been paid, if it could be paid, there was no possible hope of getting a penny beyond that to rank as indemnity.

In other words, the Allies in adopting the attitude they did adopt at Paris had not even the hope of tangible gain as a reward for their cynical disregard of their November pledge. There was no question of how that pledge was meant to be interpreted. I satisfied myself of that by discussing the matter with the delegate primarily responsible for framing the pledge in the first instance. It was intended to mean exactly what it appeared to mean. And when the Allies announced their intention of including in the demand on Germany the cost of war pensions and allowances they were in effect tearing up a document to which they had formally set their signature not six months before. Why the Americans, who declined to benefit by the demand, or to draw a penny in respect to it, consented to associate themselves with the new definition I have never understood. Apparently they felt it necessary in this as so many other cases to keep in line with the rest of the Allies, even at some expense of principle.

The reason why Great Britain and France insisted on the pensions is obvious enough. The populace of both countries had been buoyed up by the promise of extravagant indemnities, and the demand had to bear some sort of resemblance to the expectations aroused. It was understood that pressure for the inclusion of war pensions emanated in the first instance from the British

Delegation, since without that addition the sum falling due to Great Britain, whose claims would thus be confined to reparation for air raid and submarine damage, would have been so relatively inconsiderable that the contrast between the figures at which they would stand and the figures bandied about on pre-election platforms would have dealt political devastation in the ranks of the Coalition Government. In France much the same influences operated. If hopes had to be disappointed they must be disappointed gradually. Consequently disillusionment was only allowed to spread slowly, keeping pace with the endeavours of politicians of both countries to break gently to their public as a whole facts that to every student of the elements of finance had been commonplaces long before the armistice of November.

For Mr. Lloyd George and his colleagues of the British Delegation the crisis came early in April, when a House of Commons group and Lord Northcliffe's papers combined in a common attack on the Prime Minister, bearing primarily on his promises and his performance in the matter of indemnity. Lord Northcliffe himself, who had for some weeks been staying in the South of France, moved North at this juncture and established himself at Fontainebleau, some forty miles from Paris, where on a certain Sunday he held conclave with the principal members of the Paris staffs of the *Times* and *Daily Mail*. The editor of the *Times*, as has been already stated, had his temporary headquarters at Paris, and was

regularly writing the leading article in the Paris edition of the *Daily Mail*. In both papers fierce assaults on the Prime Minister appeared daily. They became pro-French as they became anti-George. The Prime Minister was compared, by implication or explicitly, with M. Clemenceau, very much to the advantage of the latter. Other harbingers of storm, like Mr. Leo Maxse and Miss Christabel Pankhurst, appeared suddenly in Paris, the latter to proclaim (in an interview in the *Daily Mail*) on behalf of what was comprehensively termed "the women of England" their expectations in the matter of indemnity.

As climax came the famous telegram from some three hundred members of the House of Commons, who, dissatisfied and suspicious at the replies they received from the Treasury Bench, wired in concert to the Prime Minister at Paris that

> "our constituents have always expected and still expect that the first action of the Peace Delegates would be, as you repeatedly stated in your election speeches, to present the Bill in full, and make Germany acknowledge the debt, and to discuss ways and means of effecting payment."

The combination of forces had by now driven the Prime Minister into a position where he was compelled to give battle. He knew, moreover—or so his entourage at Paris asserted—more about the M.P.'s. telegram than met the eye. That docu-

ment, it was alleged, was conceived not in the House of Commons at all, but no further from Paris than Fontainebleau, where the author and director of the Press campaign held his court and developed his strategy. The sequel is still fresh in memory. Mr. Bonar Law flew over to Paris to consult with his chief. Mr. Lloyd George replied to his critics in a challenging message declaring that

> "my colleagues and I mean to stand faithfully by all the pledges which we gave to the constituencies. We are prepared at any moment to submit to the judgment of Parliament, and if necessary of the country, our efforts loyally to redeem our promises."

A few days later the Prime Minister returned to England and in the House of Commons delivered himself of a vigorous denunciation of Lord Northcliffe, his aims and his methods.

On the whole the incident did something to clear the air. In one sense Mr. Lloyd George was on safe enough ground. Loyally as he might attempt to fulfil his promises it was altogether beyond his powers to fulfil them in the sense in which the ordinary man had understood them. You could not get out of Germany what Germany had not got. The moment the problem of the German indemnity was faced in earnest the inflated hopes of vast payments in money or in kind faded away. Whether the Germany of November, 1918, could have made good the damage done was more than

doubtful. For the Germany of June, 1919, it was practically out of the question. For by June, 1919, Germany had lost Alsace-Lorraine with its steel and its textile industries, she had lost Posen and its agricultural wealth, she had the prospect of losing Upper Silesia and its coal, she was stripped of practically the whole of her commercial fleet. To expect huge indemnities from a nation thus crippled was to expect the physically impossible.

The dilemma that faced the Allies lay in the fact that before Germany could pay she must produce, to produce she must have raw materials, and to get raw materials she must have long credits or a loan, which no one but the Allies could provide. That was the truth which impressed itself in the end even on Mr. W. M. Hughes, who was zealous beyond any delegate in Paris in devising means of extracting from Germany what could not be extracted. He discussed the matter on one occasion with a high financial expert. Was there no way, he pressed, of putting Germany in a position to pay? "Only one," replied the expert blandly; "give her a preference in Allied markets."

This way and that the discussions swayed. Germany could pay only in gold or securities, commodities or services. Her gold reserves and securities had dwindled by the end of the war to next to nothing, and what gold she had was earmarked for payment for the food the Allies were sending in. Services could not be rendered, for

the Allies had seized the ships they might have been rendered with. If commodities were poured into Allied or neutral markets as indemnity payments they would have the inevitable effect of driving Allied manufacturers out of business. As a common-sense diplomatist remarked to a particularly Teutophobe colleague, "You have got to recognise that you can't have both your money and your revenge." You cannot, in other words, both starve and boycott Germany and at the same time get indemnity payments out of her. Something, it was true, could be extracted in the form of coal and other natural products, but here too unforeseen complications arose. Germany had lost nearly a third of her coal through the transfer of territory, and it was necessary in any case to leave her enough to keep her industries in operation. Other difficulties cropped up in the case of potash, a commodity from which everyone was hoping everything. There were large potash deposits in Germany. Let the Allies levy toll on them. Something, in point of fact, was done in that direction, but potash is an article for which the demand is strictly limited. In 1913, the last pre-war year, for example, Great Britain imported potash from all sources to the value of less than £1,400,000—not a very considerable stage on the road towards £24,000,000,000. Moreover, when the Allies began accepting potash in payment for food supplies there was an immediate and vigorous outcry from France, who protested that the

arrangement was ruining the market for her newly-acquired potash in Alsace-Lorraine.

The Commission that grappled with the indemnity problem consisted, for Great Britain, of Lord Sumner, a Law Lord, and Lord Cunliffe, the Governor of the Bank of England, with Mr. J. M. Keynes and other Treasury officials, while the principal American members were Mr. Thomas W. Lamont, a member of the firm of J. P. Morgan, and Mr. Norman Davis. The principal French member was the Minister of Finance, M. Klotz. Various sub-commissions were formed, Mr. W. M. Hughes being chairman of that on guarantees for payment, a question which proved baffling enough to prevent the sub-commission from reporting in time to be of any use.

From the first, two distinct schools of opinion revealed themselves. Should Germany's capacity to pay be ascertained, the bill drawn on that basis and payment rigorously exacted? Or should a bill for the full estimated damage be presented and as much of it got out of Germany as could be extracted? To each course there were obvious objections, quite apart from the question of whether the total bill was to represent the full cost of the war or demands based on the agreed formula of November 5th. The French papers, most of them well supplied with ulterior inspiration, were free from all uncertainty on the matter, dwelling ceaselessly on the financial needs of France and the justice of meeting them in full at the expense

of Germany. But even their indomitable pertinacity had to yield before the hard facts of the situation.

By the beginning of April, something like agreement had been reached. The November formula, expanded by the inclusion of war pensions, was approved, and the principle of investigating the extent of the actual damage done and demanding compensation to cover it accepted. M. Clemenceau, receiving a deputation of Radical-Socialist deputies on April 15th, was able to declare that "the question of reparations has been settled between the Allies on the basis which your party regards as indispensable for France," an assertion a little qualified by the accompanying explanation that the basis of settlement was simply the payment of war pensions, and complete reparation for all personal and material damage.

The treaty actually presented to the Germans on May 7th contained terms embodying a compromise between the "whole-cost-of-the-war" school and the "November-formula" school. Germany was called on formally to accept the responsibility of herself and her Allies "for causing all the loss and damage to which the Allied and Associated Governments and their nationals have been subjected as a consequence of the war imposed on them by the aggression of Germany and her Allies." She had even to make the same admission in relation to Russia. While it was recognised that to make restitution on that scale would be altogether beyond her power she was

definitely required to pay compensation for damage falling under the November formula, together with war pensions and allowances (on the scale prevailing in the French Army), damage caused by maltreatment of prisoners, damage to property other than naval and military material, damage done to civilians through forced labour, and damages represented by fines or levies imposed in occupied territory. Towards the discharge of this liability £1,000,000,000 was to be paid within two years, and by that date a schedule of future payments extending over thirty years was to be framed by an Inter-Allied Commission on which Germany would have no representative.

Those provisions, which promised to leave Germany financially helpless for a generation, and to perpetuate the occupation of part of her territory (as a guarantee of payment) for the whole of that time, as well as giving the Reparation Commission powers of inquisitorial investigation into the whole of Germany's internal economy, were immediately challenged by the German delegation at Versailles.

Count Brockdorff-Rantzau wrote M. Clemenceau a vigorous and striking letter * in which he represented with convincing force the condition of Germany as the Peace Treaty would leave her. Her loss in raw materials like steel, zinc and coal, and the transfer to adjacent nations of agricultural districts that provided more than 20 per cent. of her cereals and potatoes, would, he point-

* See Appendix III., p. 217.

ed out, mean that millions of her inhabitants would be deprived of the means of subsistence. What capacity could a population so strained have for paying huge indemnities?

The force of such arguments was admitted by members of the Reparation Commission, both British and American, and many delegates not directly concerned with the financial settlement exerted strong influence in favour of a mitigation of the terms. In the six weeks that intervened before a new version of the Treaty, revised in the light of the German submissions, was presented, the whole matter was re-opened. The question whether a demand expressed in specific figures should be presented, or compensation under certain categories—the total being left for subsequent computation—be insisted on was vigorously contested. No agreement could be reached on a specific total. At one moment £12,000,000,000 was the sum mentioned. At another a prominent member of the Commission had a kind of supernatural prompting that pointed to £8,000,000,000. Moderate people were content to look for £5,000,000,000. Such a divergence pointed clearly to the omission of specific figures, but the result of that would be, as the Germans protested with feeling, that Germany would never know what her responsibility was. Year by year, the Reparation Commission would be combing her over and relieving her of every pfennig she had made in the year. There would never be a balance left in hand to finance industry. No one in Germany would

have any incentive to produce if it was ordained that no part of the fruit of production, beyond what was needed for bare subsistence, would be left in German hands.

Such arguments, plainly stated, had a visible effect. There was indeed a very real prospect that rather than commit herself to liabilities she had no hope of discharging Germany would refuse to sign the Treaty at all, in which case the relapse of the Central Empires into chaos, and probably into Bolshevism, was inevitable. As it was the Allies did modify their demands in certain material particulars. The Germans had proposed that their full liability should be fixed at a total of £5,000,000,000. That, however, turned out on examination to be an unreal offer, for it was proposed to pay no interest on the debt, to extend the instalments over fifty years, and to include in the total all kinds of payments (*e.g.*, for food and the maintenance of the armies of occupation) which fell properly outside the reparation category altogether.

The Allies' new proposal was that the estimate of the total payable and the method of payment should be made not independently of Germany but with her close co-operation, a German commission being constituted to work with the Allied Reparation Commission and submit proposals to it. It would be open to these commissions between them, having surveyed the actual damage and computed the probable cost of making it good, to fix a lump sum in settlement of the whole or part

of Germany's liability, thus freeing her from the dreaded menace of undefined annual exactions. The demand for a first payment of £1,000,000,000 by May, 1921, remained unaltered.

Such were the provisions of the Treaty as Germany signed it. Some conditions were laid down as to the form in which payment should be made, the surrender of merchant vessels, annual contributions of coal to France, Italy and Belgium, the assignment of dye-stuffs to the Allies generally, all representing part-payment in kind. As a whole the terms were crushingly severe—in the opinion of many British and American delegates far too severe. So far as the demands travelled outside the November formula that criticism is unanswerable. To have exacted what was provided for under that formula would in itself have laid on Germany an almost insupportable burden, but it would in that case have been a burden imposed in strict justice and representing a rigorously equitable requital for the methods to which Germany had chosen to resort. As it was it was left open to Germany to charge the Allies with a grave breach of faith.

One virtue in the formula adopted was that the system of investigation agreed on would provide for a just apportionment of damages as between the several Allies, as well as for a fair computation of Germany's total liability. That was a matter of some importance, for there had been no secret about the discontent of France and Belgium in particular with the attitude of other Allies

whose national losses had been far less. Again and again it was urged that Great Britain (America was hardly involved at all) should in a spirit of self-abnegation forgo her claims till the two devastated countries had been set on their feet. In any case the Anglo-Saxon countries would have to furnish loans for this purpose, but a spontaneous act of generosity in connection with the indemnity would have stirred emotions calculated to smooth out every subsequent difficulty that arose. But no such offer was made. Finally Belgium, fired by the example of Italy and Japan at the time of the Fiume and Shantung episodes, talked openly, though hardly with serious intent, of withdrawing her representatives from the Conference. Ultimately the Allies consented under pressure to do what they might have done with the grace of spontaneity weeks earlier, and guarantee Belgium prior rights over the indemnity receipts up to a total of £100,000,000. But to the end Great Britain made no hint of subordinating her claims to the far more urgent necessity of France.

Chapter VIII

LENIN AND BELA KUN

THE greatest unsolved problem before the Conference was Russia. The old monarchist Russia that went into the war as the ally of France and Great Britain had vanished for ever. The March revolution of 1917, and the succession of Kerensky to power had brought a new Russia to birth. It was a Russia the Allies proved themselves incompetent to handle, and it gave place in November of the same year to a Bolshevist Russia, under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky.

The Bolshevists, it was universally agreed, could not last for six weeks. It was doubtful whether the first week of 1918 would see them in power. They had snatched a sudden advantage and would go as swiftly as they came. So the prophets of every Allied country, both the prophets who sympathised and the prophets who condemned. Yet the assembling of the Peace Conference delegates in January, 1919, found Lenin still in power, and to all appearance well established. The affairs of Russia were inextricably complicated. The Bolshevists, holding Petrograd and Moscow and the greater part of European

Russia, were encompassed on all sides by a circle of enemies. The British forces at Archangel were upholding a precarious local government under Nicholas Tchaikovsky; there was another British force at Murmansk; the Finns, the Esthonians, the Lithuanians, the Poles, were all operating with more zeal or less against Lenin. Petlura in the Ukraine was moving armies about with doubtful purpose. Denikin and his Cossacks, supported by French, British and Italian detachments based on the Black Sea, was pushing up the Dniester, Dnieper and Don. Admiral Koltchak was trying to drive west into Russia from Omsk. On every front the civil war swayed to and fro with inconclusive issue. To all appearance it might sway to and fro for ever.

That was the situation the Allies took in hand at the beginning of the Conference in Paris. They could not forget what Russia had done in the early days of the war, when Rennenkampf's incursion into East Prussia had detained German divisions that might otherwise have been overwhelming France in the west. Neither could they forget that they were at Paris to make peace, and a peace that left Russia torn by civil war could hardly be called peace at all. As it was the very question What is Russia? could not be answered. The Bolsheviks were of course not represented at Paris, for the Allies were actually, though not formally, at war with them and were starving their country of necessities by blockade. Various anti-Bolsheviks, including M. Tchaikovsky, M.

Sazonoff and Prince Lvoff, were there, but it was manifestly futile to enter into compacts with men to whom no effective authority attached at all. Either Russia must be ignored altogether or the Allies must take the initiative themselves and evolve some solution of the crisis.

Their way was by no means clear. Feeling ran high against the Bolsheviks in every Allied country. They had so weakened Russia, the charge went, as to leave her prostrate before Germany, and they had signed the surrender peace of Brest-Litovsk, at a moment when a still effective Russia might have been sealing the final victory of the Allies. Apart from that, opinion in all Allied countries with regard to the Bolsheviks was divided. All classes were at one in condemning their atrocities, though the degree of credulity with which every kind of irresponsible legend was accepted tended to vary. There was a left wing in Great Britain and America and Italy and France that sympathised with much of Lenin's political doctrine, and a right wing that hated his theories hardly less than the methods by which he imposed them. To the latter class any kind of compromise or even communication with the Bolshevik leaders was anathema. The former, realising the hopelessness of attempting to subdue Russia by force of arms, were prepared to welcome any opportunity of negotiation on reasonable terms.

Another factor to be reckoned with—particularly since it continued to influence the Conference to the end—was the special attitude of France.

France had large financial interests in Russia. Her investors were large holders of Russian bonds, and when the interest was no longer forthcoming the French Government had had to assume responsibility for the payments itself. But the principal was in jeopardy as well as the interest, and it was not surprising that the bitter indignation of the French against the men ostensibly responsible for Russia's financial default should powerfully stimulate the demand for the support of leaders like Koltchak or Denikin, who would at the same time overthrow the authors of Russia's bankruptcy and undertake themselves to honour the country's obligations to its creditors.

Such were the tendencies and cross-currents of which the Peace Conference had to take account in January. The Russian problem was two-fold, concerning both the pacification of the country and its representation at the Conference. The Allied leaders decided on a move that might have settled both questions simultaneously. It was clear that if any result of value was to be attained the fighting must stop and the heads of the opposing factions must come together and discuss their differences. The decision to act on that decision was not reached without other alternatives being fully canvassed. The French were strong advocates of military intervention. When the Council of Ten took the matter in hand Marshal Foch was present at the discussion. President Wilson, according to reports which penetrated outside the council chamber, asked him what force would be

required to subdue the Bolsheviks. His estimate was 350,000 of the best troops. The President turned to Mr. Lloyd George, "How many would Great Britain supply?" he asked. "None," replied the Prime Minister tersely; "how many would America supply?" "None," said the President. Mr. Wilson then turned to M. Clemenceau, "And France?" he questioned. Clemenceau made a gesture of resignation. "None," he jerked out. That account of what happened may not be verbally accurate—according to Mr. Bullitt it was Mr. Lloyd George who took the initiative—but in substance at any rate it fairly represents the discussion.

Military action on the great scale being thus ruled out, the question of a conference of the Russian groups was taken up in earnest. That solution was urged on the Council of Ten by President Wilson and Mr. Lloyd George. The latter indeed was for summoning representatives of all the groups to Paris, but M. Clemenceau frowned the suggestion out of court. The proposal finally agreed on stood technically in the name of President Wilson, but the British Prime Minister was understood to be entitled to an equal share of the credit of authorship. In view of subsequent events the material portions of the official announcement drawn up by Mr. Wilson and issued on January 22nd are worth quoting textually.

> "The single object the representatives of the Associated Powers have had in mind in the

discussions of the course they should pursue with regard to Russia has been to help the Russian people, not to hinder them or to interfere in any manner with their right to settle their own affairs in their own way. They regard the Russian people as their friends, not their enemies, and are willing to help them in any way they are willing to be helped.

"They recognise the absolute right of the Russian people to direct their own affairs without dictation or direction of any kind from outside; they do not wish to exploit or make use of Russia in any way.

"They recognise the Revolution without reservation, and will in no way and in no circumstances aid or give countenance to any attempt at a counter-revolution. It is not their wish or purpose to favour or assist any one of the organised groups now contending for the leadership and guidance of Russia as against the others. Their sole and sincere purpose is to do what they can to bring Russia peace and an opportunity to find her way out of her present troubles.

"In this spirit and with this purpose they have taken the following action:

"They invite every organised group that is now exercising or attempting to exercise political authority or military control anywhere in Siberia or within the boundaries of European Russia as they stood before the war just concluded (except in Finland) to send representa-

tives, not exceeding three representatives from each group, to the Princes Islands, Sea of Marmora, where they will be met by representatives of the Associated Powers, provided in the meantime there is a truce of arms among the parties invited, and that all armed forces anywhere sent or directed against any people or territory outside the boundaries of European Russia, as they stood before the war, or against Finland, or against any people or territory whose autonomous action is in contemplation in the Fourteen Articles upon which the present peace negotiations are based, shall be meanwhile withdrawn and aggressive military action cease."

The message concluded with an assurance that every facility would be extended by the Allies to representatives of every group to enable them to reach Princes Islands by the time appointed, February 15th.

Quotation of the main passages in the Allies' invitation has been necessary in order that the causes of the failure that attended it may be duly appreciated. Its weakness was that it stipulated for a general truce as a condition of the holding of the conference at Prinkipo, or Princes Islands. That condition was proper enough in itself, but it meant on the face of it that a rejection of the truce by any one or more of the parties invited would invalidate the whole proposal. It was moreover unfortunate that the Allies offered no assurance that they would during such a truce dis-

continue the despatch of munitions to Koltchak and Denikin, who were almost entirely dependent on such supplies.

Those defects in the proposal would have given the Bolsheviks some justification for looking askance at it, but in point of fact it was not they at all who were responsible for the breakdown of the project. The first response to the Allied invitation came from Paris, where representatives of the various anti-Bolshevik groups were assembled. The very evening the announcement of the Council of Ten was made a British correspondent in Paris * was "authorised to declare herewith that the Governments of Omsk (Admiral Koltchak), Ekaterinodar (General Denikin), Archangel and the Crimea will categorically refuse to send representatives to confer with the assassins of their kinsmen and the destroyers of the Fatherland." Twenty-four hours later, Prof. Miliukoff, the leader of the former Cadet party in Russia, made it known that "he deplored the Allied invitation to meet the Bolsheviks on Princes Islands." These unofficial expressions of opinion were shortly confirmed by formal declarations on the part of all the most important of the groups in question.

The Bolsheviks meanwhile had never received the Allied invitation at all. It should have been sent them by wireless. There were no mechanical difficulties whatever in the way. The invitation was simply never sent, for reasons which the

* Dr. E. J. Dillon, of the *Daily Telegraph*.

French wireless authorities or their superiors have failed to explain. The Moscow Government had, however, become informed of the proposal through wireless Press messages picked up by its receiving stations. The Allied move manifestly took the Bolshevik leaders by surprise, and their first step was to satisfy themselves of its bona fides. They immediately despatched a wireless message to their representative at Stockholm, making certain enquiries and concluding "we do not reject the principle of a conference and on receiving confirmation we will carefully consider the proposal." Inquiries were also made of M. Jean Longuet, the French Socialist leader, and editor of the Socialist Journal, *Le Populaire,* but the French Government after some hesitation refused to give M. Longuet facilities for replying.

Lenin, however, appeared to be content with the information he got, for on February 4th, the following definite acceptance was sent out from Moscow by Tchitcherin, the Commissary for Foreign Affairs in the Soviet Government:—

> "The Russian Soviet Government . . . declares that it is ready if there be occasion to enter into a general agreement with the Entente Powers on their undertaking not to interfere in Russian internal affairs. On the basis indicated, the Russian Soviet Government is disposed to enter into immediate conference on Princes Islands or at some other place, be it with all the Entente Powers or with some of

them separately, or even with some Russian political groups at the request of the Entente Powers. The Russian Soviet Government begs the Powers of the Entente to inform it without delay to what place its representatives are to go, and also the date of the meeting and the route which is to be followed."

Twenty-four hours later a second message was sent out announcing the readiness of the Soviets to acknowledge liability for the debts of Russia to the subjects of the Allied Powers.

Meanwhile the sands were running out. The date fixed for the Prinkipo Conference was February 15th. On February 9th, M. Pichon said it was uncertain whether the conference would be held, as practically no one but the Bolsheviks had consented to attend. Three days later it was announced that the border nations, the Esthonians, Letts, Lithuanians and Ukrainians, had accepted the invitation.

But the prospect of a conference at which the Bolsheviks would inevitably predominate was by no means to the liking of France, whatever President Wilson and Mr. Lloyd George might think of it. No steps were taken to carry the project through, though Allied representatives had been tentatively selected. The charge was brought against the Bolsheviks that they had not ceased fighting,* a sufficiently cynical indictment, seeing

* Mr. Lloyd George stated later (April 16th) in the House of Commons that "they would not accede to the request that they should cease fighting."

that Denikin and Koltchak, supported by the Allies, were hard at work fighting them, and had refused the invitation to a truce and a conference. February 15th, the date appointed for the Prinkipo meeting, came and went. No conference was held. No decision not to hold a conference was taken. The whole thing simply lapsed. M. Clemenceau was shot, Mr. Wilson went back to America to sign Acts of Congress, Mr. Lloyd George returned to England to deal with Labour unrest, in his absence from Paris, Mr. Winston Churchill flew over by aeroplane to stiffen up the Council of Ten to a militarist policy in Russia. When the three chiefs re-assembled to take up the work of peace-making again, the Prinkipo proposition was by tacit consent left to moulder on the shelf.

But by that time the Russian problem was being approached from a new angle. The Americans in particular, though there is every reason to believe Mr. Lloyd George shared their view, were profoundly impressed with the hopelessness of letting things drift. As soon as it was clear that the Prinkipo project was well dead they set about finding some other means of exploring the possibilities of peace. A letter received a couple of months before from M. Litvinoff, expressing the earnest desire of the Bolsheviks for a settlement, had made a considerable impression on certain important persons at Paris, and the proposal to send an envoy to Moscow to test the value of M. Litvinoff's professions found a good deal of support. At the instance of Col. House, Mr. William

C. Bullitt, an official of the State Department at Washington, and a member of the American Peace Commission, was sent to Russia on that errand. The mission was kept entirely secret. Mr. Lansing, in his evidence before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said Mr. Bullitt was appointed by the Conference, but according to Mr. Bullitt himself only the British and American delegations knew of his journey. In any case Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Balfour were cognisant of it. The whole affair has since become so much of a cause célèbre, as the result of Mr. Bullitt's disclosures before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, that it is unnecessary to follow the incident in detail here.

Mr. Bullitt duly made his journey, taking with him as travelling companions, Mr. Lincoln Steffens, a well-known American journalist, and Captain Pettit, a United States Army Officer. At Moscow he had a personal interview with Lenin and made the purpose of his visit known. The whole situation was debated by the Council of People's Commissaries, and Mr. Bullitt was given a written statement of the Peace Terms the Soviet Government would be willing to accept if they were offered by April 10th.

Before the end of March the two Americans (Captain Pettit had not yet returned) were back in Paris. The secret of their mission had been well kept, and it was not till Mr. Bullitt had drafted his report that the knowledge of his visit to Russia got abroad. What actually happened be-

came known to a comparatively small circle in Paris, but the full story has since been given to the world by Mr. Bullitt himself. He sent in his report to President Wilson, who appears to have been too much preoccupied with something else to give it adequate attention. Probably he was content in this as in so many other cases to rely on the mature judgment of Col. House.

Mr. Lloyd George on the other hand showed a lively interest in the affair. He invited Mr. Bullitt to breakfast, General Smuts being also present. The report was fully discussed and the best line of immediate action debated. By this time the news of the Bullitt mission was getting into the papers, which with few exceptions displayed violent hostility to any kind of negotiation with Lenin. The Northcliffe journals were fierce in their attack on the Prime Minister, and Mr. Winston Churchill was understood to be moving actively in the background in England. Questions were asked persistently in the House of Commons and disposed of by answers which subsequent events have shown to be gravely misleading.

In the middle of April, Mr. Lloyd George went back from Paris to address the House of Commons. Now at last the full facts would be told. The Prime Minister had thrashed out the whole affair with Mr. Bullitt. He knew what terms the Soviet Government had officially declared itself ready to accept. He had discussed the despatch of prominent British politicians to Russia to promote a solution of the problem. All that was in ques-

tion was the degree of emphasis he would lay on the hopes thus unexpectedly opened up. Such was the anticipation. Its fulfilment is best indicated by the quotation from Hansard of the Prime Minister's actual reference to the Russian question.

> "We have had no approaches at all," he said in response to a question interpolated by Mr. Clynes. "Of course there are constantly men of all nationalities coming from and going to Russia, always coming back with their own tales from Russia. But we have had nothing authentic. We have no approaches of any sort or kind. I have only heard of reports that others have got proposals, which they assume to have come from authentic quarters, but these have never been put before the Conference by any member of the Conference at all. There was some suggestion that there was some young American who had come back. All I can say about that is that it is not for me to judge the value of these communications. But if the President of the United States had attached any value to them he would have brought them before the Conference, and he certainly did not."

Such a statement, made by the Prime Minister of England, and read in the light of what had actually happened since Mr. Bullitt's return from Russia, put an end to the prospect of any direct negotiations with Moscow. The Soviet Government would inevitably have viewed any approach with the gravest suspicion, even if the Allies had

been willing to make it. They knew that a statement of the terms they would accept had been taken to Paris by Mr. Bullitt. They had plenty of means of learning what Mr. Lloyd George said in the House of Commons. It was hardly calculated to elevate their estimate of the political honour of the Allies.

None the less the Bullitt mission was not entirely fruitless. Out of it grew a proposal, on the genesis of which Mr. Hoover could cast a good deal of light, that some steps should be taken to relieve the appalling distress known to be prevailing in Russia as the result partly of the Allied blockade, partly of the inefficiency of the Bolshevik administration. It was clear that any enterprise of the kind would have to be carried out by neutrals, that it could not be allowed to be turned to the military advantage of the Soviet Government, and that the single title to relief must be the physical need of the individual. At the end of March such a scheme was proposed by Dr. Nansen, the distinguished Norwegian explorer, in a letter to the Council of Four. It was close on a fortnight before the letter was answered. President Wilson, Mr. Lloyd George and Signor Orlando were all in favour of the scheme, but M. Clemenceau's signature took a great deal of getting. The reply was finally despatched to Dr. Nansen and issued to the Press for publication on April 18th. The tone of the Allied letter was cordial. Dr. Nansen's proposal was welcomed

and accepted, the conditions attached to the acceptance being comprised in the statement "That such a course (the adoption of the scheme) would involve cessation of hostilities within definitive lines in the territory of Russia is obvious, and the cessation of hostilities would necessarily involve a complete suspension of the transfer of troops and military material of all sorts to and within Russian territory."

Dr. Nansen's scheme having been thus approved there followed the same tragic farce as after the Prinkipo decision. The Allied leaders were one and all seized with sudden qualms as to what their critics at home would say of people who consented to the feeding of Bolsheviks and communication with Lenin. Dr. Nansen had to put his proposal before the Moscow authorities by wireless. But wireless facilities proved impossible to obtain. The French would not allow the message to be transmitted by their system. The British refused to forward it by theirs. The Dutch station at Scheveningen was not powerful enough to reach Moscow. It was May 4th before the Nansen proposal reached Moscow by a devious route. The Soviet Government immediately sent off a long reply, gratefully accepting the proposed relief, pointing out that the question of the cessation of hostilities was a matter to be discussed with the Allies (who had made no suggestion that Koltchak and Denikin, whom they were at the time supplying with munitions, should be checked in

their activities) and asking Dr. Nansen to meet a Soviet representative in a neutral country to discuss the whole project.

That was sufficient loophole for the vacillating Four. A story was immediately put about, as in the case of Prinkipo, that the Bolsheviks had refused to agree to a cessation of hostilities. By the middle of May the Nansen scheme was as dead as the Prinkipo. Dr. Nansen himself, with whom I discussed the outlook about this time, was in a state of profound and intelligible dejection. As a last resource he left Paris and went home to Norway in the hope of effecting something from there. It was of no avail. The scheme was dead, and nothing has been heard of it since.

Having seen Prinkipo fail and Nansen fail the Council of Four now proceeded to reverse its policy. The Russian émigrés in Paris, supported by practically the whole of the Paris Press, had never ceased to urge the Allies to recognise Koltchak. It was some time before their campaign bore fruit. Koltchak was not in good odour with democratically minded members of the Allied delegations. If he was not a monarchist himself he had chosen to surround himself with monarchists, and the Americans in particular were by no means friendly to the idea of lending him the moral support attaching to recognition by them. Japan was the first power to make a move. She accorded the Siberian Commander full recognition. The other major Allies argued the question to and fro. President Wilson, refusing to commit

himself in the dark, directed the American Minister at Tokio, Mr. Roland Morris, to go to Omsk, interview Admiral Koltchak and report on him to Paris. Having done that the President, without waiting for the report in question, joined hands with the other Allies, who at the beginning of June decided with characteristic equivocation not to recognise Koltchak formally, but to support him with money, munitions and supplies in return for his assurance that in the event of his victory over the Bolsheviks he would call a Constituent Assembly and take other measures approved by the Allies. Hardly had this been decided when Koltchak began to sustain a series of reverses which no doubt caused the more hesitant members of the Council of Four to congratulate themselves on their refusal to grant him full recognition.

From this time the Council tended more and more to let Russian affairs drift. The French army and fleet in the Black Sea were withdrawn after something little short of a mutiny, the Americans came away from Archangel, and though Mr. Winston Churchill succeeded in keeping British troops in the North of Russia till the beginning of autumn the pressure of public opinion compelled him to abandon whatever larger projects he was cherishing.

While Bolshevism in Russia was being thus mishandled the same social disease was manifesting itself in different forms in more than one country in Central Europe. In Germany the new Republican Government succeeded by drastic repres-

sion in holding down the Spartacist movement, but in April and May the best informed persons in Paris, who were usually those in touch with Mr. Hoover's Pan-European relief system, were expecting to hear at any moment of outbreaks in Austria, Rumania, Hungary and Italy. The causes of the unrest were largely economic. All Central Europe was on the verge of starvation. Everywhere the people were calling on their Governments for food, and when the Governments failed, as they necessarily did, to supply what was needed the last claim they could make on popular support was hopelessly prejudiced. In Rumania the supplies rushed in by Mr. Hoover saved the situation. In Austria, things were so desperate that no party had the physical strength to make a revolution. In Hungary, the outbreak came in the latter part of March.

In this case indeed the causes of the unrest were not wholly economic. The trouble arose in the first instance out of a misunderstanding, for which a member of an Allied military mission was responsible, over the demarcation of the frontier between Hungary and Rumania. The officer in question represented a line, which was in fact intended to be the temporary boundary of a neutral zone, as the permanent frontier between the two countries. If that had been the actual intention of the Allies, Hungary would have been deprived of a large tract of territory and a considerable population to which she had a complete right on ethnical grounds. Popular indignation at the

prospect of such a settlement was turned against the government that had consented to it. The feeling roused was such that the Karolyi administration could not stand against it. Bela Kun, a Jewish Communist, gained possession of Buda-Pesth and established a Soviet Government there. The news of the revolution caused profound concern at Paris, particularly in French circles. The poison of Bolshevism had penetrated the *cordon sanitaire* the Allies had worked so hard to create and preserve from the Baltic to the Black Sea. Once it had got into Central Europe, who could tell where it would stop?

One danger was Italy, where the official Socialists, who had opposed the war from the first, were believed to be ready to enter into relations with the Hungarian Soviets. "If you want to send a message to Bela Kun," a French diplomatic official said to me, "hand it to the Italians." The situation formed the subject of grave discussions at Paris. Military action was decided on. General Mangin, the hero of the July offensive, was called to the capital. It was understood that he was to organise a Polish and Rumanian force to combat the new peril. His departure was momentarily expected. He did depart, but only to return to his command at Mainz. The Allies had suddenly taken a new decision. The head of the Allied Food Mission in the area that included Hungary, Mr. C. K. Butler, had arrived in Paris and given his diagnosis of the situation. Twenty-four hours after his report had been received an Allied

general set out for Buda-Pesth as representative of the Council of Four. But his name was not Mangin, but Smuts, and he went as conciliator, not as aggressor. His mission was quickly discharged. He formed the opinion at once that Bela Kun held no authority in the country generally, though Buda-Pesth itself was in his power. On the other hand there was no prospect of the establishment of any Hungarian Government strong enough to administer the country effectively. General Smuts returned at once to Paris and urged that the Allies should immediately despatch a capable administrator to direct Hungarian affairs till a permanent settlement could be reached. Bela Kun had not at this stage developed sufficient strength to resist such a proposal and it was known that the population generally would welcome it.

The Americans at Paris gave the proposal their strong support. The French and Italians did not. Nothing was done. Bela Kun was allowed to establish himself, encouraged by Lenin, with whom he had opened communication. In the middle of June a flutter of indignation and scandal was caused by the report that the Allies had invited Bela Kun to Paris. What had actually happened, it turned out, was that a message had been sent to Buda-Pesth warning the Communist leader that the now imminent invitation to him would be jeopardised unless he mended his ways. According to the wrathful French Press, the author of

a communication out of which Bela Kun was quite dexterous enough to make capital was a British official. The Allied policy was now to wait till the Communists fell. Unfortunately they did not fall. Things drifted on, till at the beginning of August a counter-revolution broke out, engineered by Rumanians and supported by Rumanian troops who marched into Buda-Pesth, pillaging as they went. As a climax, a Hapsburg prince, the Archduke Joseph, was placed at the head of the new Government. That was too much for the British and Americans at least. Mr. Hoover, who was on the point of leaving France for America, was hurried off to Hungary to investigate the situation.

The Director of Relief went straight to Buda-Pesth, made his enquiries, sized up the situation with his customary decision, and hurried back to Paris to urge on the Supreme Council the need for taking summary measures to get the Rumanians out of Buda-Pesth, and behind the agreed boundary line. The Council acted with unusual despatch. An ultimatum to Rumania was issued, as a result of which the invading troops were withdrawn and an undertaking given that the stipulations of the Allied Council should be complied with. At the same time Hungary was told that no Hapsburgs could be tolerated, and in the early part of September a Socialist, but not Bolshevik, Government was formed, charged with the task of satisfying the Allies that it was sufficiently respectable to negotiate with and sufficiently repre-

sentative to hold its ground. At the end of September it was still passing through its indefinite period of probation and the treaty which the Allies had ready at Paris remained in M. Dutasta's drawer.

Chapter IX

BUILDING THE LEAGUE *

IN many ways the creation of the League of Nations was the greatest piece of constructive work effected by the Conference. It was one of the first to be taken up and one of the first to be completed. The Commission entrusted with the task, the strongest that sat on any question throughout the Conference, applied itself to its work with resolution, and in spite of sharp differences on certain individual points the measure of agreement reached was notable.

The formal starting-point of the work of building the League was the last of President Wilson's Fourteen Points,—"a general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike." Building on that foundation began long before the Paris Conference opened. It had begun indeed before the Fourteen Points themselves were enunciated. In 1917, steps had been taken by the British Foreign Office, at the instance of Lord Robert Cecil, to have an outline scheme for a League of Nations

* The Covenant of the League of Nations is reprinted in full in Appendix V, p. 222.

drawn up. A strong committee was appointed under the chairmanship of Lord Justice Phillimore, and by the middle of 1918 a draft of a League of Nations constitution had been evolved, which was sent at once to President Wilson in America. While he still had this under consideration, in December, 1918, a new plan for a League of Nations was published by General Smuts, which so impressed the President that he had the two schemes collated, largely by Col. House, and then discussed point by point with General Smuts and Lord Robert Cecil during the opening days of the Peace Conference, with the result that when the League of Nations Commission began its work it had before it, in addition to two statements of general principles submitted by France and Italy respectively, a detailed draft constitution agreed on in substance by both Great Britain and America.

The Commission was brought into being at the second Plenary Session of the Peace Conference, held at the Quai d'Orsay, on January 25th, when a resolution of which the salient clauses were as follows, was adopted:—

> "It is essential to the maintenance of the world settlement which the Associated Nations are now met to establish, that a League of Nations be created to promote international co-operation, to ensure the fulfilment of accepted international obligations and to provide safeguards against war.

"The Conference therefore appoints a Committee representative of the Associated Governments to work out the details of the constitution and functions of the League."

The Commission consisted of nineteen members, two for each of the five major powers and nine from the remaining Allied Nations. Including as it did President Wilson and Col. House, Lord Robert Cecil and General Smuts, M. Vénisélos and Signor Orlando, it was by far the strongest body, other than the Councils of Ten or Four, sitting at Paris. Considering the cold water that had been poured on the League as a practical institution both in Great Britain and France, the League of Nations Commission at the Peace Conference began its career under distinctly hopeful auspices. M. Clemenceau regarded the whole matter with a kind of good-humoured cynicism, but President Poincaré in his inaugural address to the Conference spoke with emphasis on the necessity of an effective Society of Nations, and President Wilson's speech a week later, at the Plenary Session at which the League of Nations Commission was appointed, vitally improved the whole prospects of the League.

At the same time it would be affectation to pretend that either France or Italy as a whole manifested any undue enthusiasm for the League at the outset. It was clear that its chief architects would be the British and American representatives, who found themselves faced with the deli-

cate task of securing the adoption of their mutually agreed proposals without creating any impression of an Anglo-Saxon domination. The leading figure on the whole Commission was Lord Robert Cecil. President Wilson was the permanent chairman, and he kept perpetually in touch with the Commission's activities, but his work as a member of the Council of Ten, and later of the Council of Four, made heavy demands on his time and strength, and he was well satisfied to leave the details of the League of Nations work to Lord Robert Cecil and Col. House. The Japanese representatives, Baron Makino and Viscount Chinda, for the most part maintained their habitual silence, except when the one particular amendment in which they had a personal interest was under discussion, but M. Léon Bourgeois, who lived only to carry his proposal on an international General Staff, was constantly on his feet, and the ripe judgment of M. Vénisélos could always be relied on in a crisis.

One fundamental question the Commission had to decide was whether members of the League should be bound by majority decisions or only by unanimous votes. If they accepted the majority decision it would mean that a nation like Great Britain or the United States might be committed to a policy to which it strongly demurred at the will of a majority consisting largely of States of the calibre of Liberia and Siam and Guatemala. If they refused to be so bound it would mean making every decision dependent on a unanimous vote

and placing the whole League at the mercy of one dissentient nation,—an unwelcome revival of the principle of the old *liberum veto* in Poland.

Between those alternatives there was no middle course, and the Commission could only decide one way. To submit to a majority decision of a Congress of Nations meant a definite surrender of national sovereignty, and for that the world was manifestly not ready. Neither America nor Great Britain nor any other nation would agree so to mortgage its freedom of action. The utmost concession obtainable was the provision that in certain cases a unanimous vote of the Council of the League, confirmed by a majority vote of the Assembly, should be binding. That fully safeguarded the interest of the major Powers, who were all represented on the Council and could therefore veto any project in its initial stage if they so desired.

Apart from the unanimity question the most contentious matters falling under the head of general principles were the constitution of the Assembly of the League and the sanctions by which the decisions should be enforced. Another question round which violent controversy has subsequently centred in America, the grant of six separate votes to the British Empire, raised curiously little discussion at Paris. The British Dominions had taken too conspicuous a part in the war,—France in particular was too conscious of her debt to them,—for their right to individual representation to be seriously challenged. They were ad-

mitted as separate signatories of the Treaty and accepted as individual members of the League. Whatever opposition there was to that course would have assumed even more modest proportions than it did if it had been more widely recognised that the concession to the Dominions is in reality a blow at the political solidarity of the British Empire, in that it provides the several constituent parts of the Empire for the first time in history with an opportunity of voting against one another before the eyes of the world.

The constitution of the League had been discussed by General Smuts in his pamphlet. The obvious, and apparently the only possible, method of the appointment of national representatives on the League Assembly was nomination by the Governments of each of the participating States, but this had been widely criticised as undemocratic in that it made no provision for the representation of minorities, with the result that the League would become merely a League of Governments and not a League of Peoples. General Smuts himself was not too explicit on the point, but he did at least raise the issue by his submission that "both the Governments and Parliaments of the States might send delegates, and perhaps even parties could be represented by the selection of members on the principle of proportional representation." Minds are still at work on this problem. Lord Robert Cecil, for example, has put forward a proposal not for the transformation of the Assembly into a popularly elected body, but for

the creation of a third and purely deliberative gathering, consisting of representatives of peoples, to sit concurrently with the Assembly of the League. "There are strong arguments," he suggests (in the *League of Nations Journal* for August, 1919), "for having in addition to the Assembly a body of the representatives of the popular element in each Member country, their method of selection being left to the country concerned." But the Commission itself had no option but to decide on the institution of an Assembly appointed by Governments, which were however at liberty to select in any way they chose.

As to the means of enforcing the decisions of the League, the French, represented by M. Léon Bourgeois, agitated with indomitable pertinacity for the adoption of two amendments which appeared to command the practically solid support of the nation. One provided for the appointment of a League inspectorate, whose business it would be to satisfy the Council that individual nations were duly carrying out the obligations imposed on them in the matter of the reduction of armaments. The other aimed at the creation of a naval and military General Staff, charged with having always in an advanced state of preparation plans for the mobilisation of the national fleets and armies at the disposal of the League in case resort had to be had to armed pressure against some recalcitrant nation, whether a member of the League or not.

No man could have worked harder than M.

Bourgeois to get his views adopted. Altogether he fought his battle five times. He defined his principles in the Plenary Session at which the League of Nations Commission was appointed on January 25th; he brought them up in the course of the Commission's discussions; he moved them at the Plenary Session in February at which the first draft of the Covenant was presented to the Peace Conference; he moved them again while the revised draft was being debated by the Commission in April; and he moved them for the fifth and last time at the Plenary Session at which the Covenant was presented and approved in its final form on April 28th. M. Bourgeois' oratory is of the copious order, and the speech in which he was in the habit of commending his proposals became almost distressingly familiar to his colleagues on the League of Nations Commission by the time its fifth rendering had fallen on their ears. But M. Bourgeois wearied not. Even after his fifth rebuff he still expressed the hope, fortified by a chorus of approving Paris journals, that the League itself would in due time accord him that favourable verdict which both the Commission and the Peace Conference had withheld.

M. Bourgeois may prove to be right, but the objections raised to his proposals were substantial and they are not likely to be lightly abandoned. It was pointed out with regard to the inspection of armaments that a nation which had pledged itself (under Article VIII. of the Covenant) to supply full and frank information on its

actual and potential armaments could not hold it consistent with its dignity to submit to outside inspection as a test of whether its statements were true, nor was there any prospect that such inspection would be effective. With regard to a League General Staff, it was pointed out that in order to be able at any moment to direct armed force against any nation such a staff would have to be perpetually preparing paper plans of campaign against each individual country, a process which would certainly not conduce to general tranquillity. Incidentally, any State against which plans were prepared would always know in advance what they were.

The French amendments none the less were a permanent feature of every discussion of the League constitution. The real landmark in those discussions was the break in the work of the Commission due to President Wilson's brief return to America in February. During the ten days Mr. Wilson spent on that occasion in the United States sundry amendments were proposed to him by friends and foes of the League in his own country. One aimed at safeguarding the Monroe Doctrine; one was designed to secure the right of withdrawal from the League to any nation desiring to exercise it; a third had the effect of excluding matters of domestic policy from the jurisdiction of the League.

All these proposals Mr. Wilson brought before the League Commission on his return to Paris in March. The Monroe Doctrine amendment was

frankly a concession to the critics of the League in America. The President himself considered it unnecessary. It was none the less thought expedient to frame a declaratory clause on the subject, and the final draft of the Covenant therefore included a provision (Article XXI.) that "nothing in this Covenant shall be deemed to affect the validity of international engagements such as treaties of arbitration, or regional understandings like the Monroe Doctrine for securing the maintenance of peace."

The second American amendment, on the right of withdrawal from the League, was accepted, while the third objection was met by the insertion in Article XV. of a provision that matters "found by the Council to arise out of a matter which by international law is solely within the domestic jurisdiction of that party" shall not be within the competence of the League. It is a nice question how far the Irish controversy, for example, is excluded from the purview of the League by that clause, or included in it by Clause XI., which declares it "to be the friendly right of each member of the League to bring to the attention of the Assembly or of the Council any circumstances whatever affecting international relations which threaten to disturb international peace or the good understanding between nations on which peace depends." Though the question is arguable, there can be little real doubt that any nation wishing to raise the Irish problem under that clause would be perfectly in order in doing so.

The one really acute difference of opinion on the League of Nations Commission arose over a desire expressed by the Japanese delegates to secure the inclusion in the Covenant of a clause declaring the racial equality of all members of the League. The whole treatment of this matter was singularly unfortunate. There were not many things the Japanese wanted out of the Conference, and of those few, one, the reversion to German rights in China, was likely to be vigorously contested. There was all the more reason therefore for giving Japan anything else to which she had a reasonable title. And to such a declaration as she sought on racial equality she certainly had a reasonable title. The matter admittedly was not simple. It might be difficult to exclude delicate immigration questions, in which both America and Australia had a lively interest. But Japan was accepting all the obligations of the League. Her navy and army, like those of other nations, were to be at its call. It was not a great deal to ask that in consideration of that the League should formally declare that in its eyes a yellow man was as good as a white.

For that was really all that the Japanese wanted. Baron Makino, who moved the amendment embodying the desired declaration, expressly disclaimed any intention of raising the question of immigration. He fully concurred, indeed, in the previously registered decision to regard immigration as a matter of domestic concern, excluded as such from the purview of the League. What

the amendment, which was moved in a studiously temperate speech, called for was recognition of the "equality of nations and just treatment of their nationals." The sensitiveness of Eastern nations on such matters was perhaps underrated by the Commission, for though the amendment was strongly supported by the Chinese representative, Dr. Wellington Koo (almost the single instance of wholehearted co-operation between the two nations throughout the Conference), it failed to secure adoption. Australia was the real stumbling-block. Mr. Hughes, who had been conspicuously chilly in his attitude to the League as a whole, was not himself a member of the Commission, but he had urged his views with such effect that Lord Robert Cecil, as the principal British representative, had forced on him the inherently uncongenial task of opposing the Japanese proposition. He was supported without great enthusiasm by President Wilson, but the Anglo-Saxon powers found scant support for their attitude and the Japanese proposal was carried on a division by a substantial majority. In virtue, however, of a decision that no provision should be inserted in the Covenant in the face of serious objection by any participating nation the amendment failed to secure adoption. The Japanese delegates did not parade their disappointment, but they did not disguise it, and there was a disquieting emphasis in Baron Makino's dignified but bitter expression, at the Plenary Session of April 28th, of the "poig-

nant regret" with which the rejection of the Japanese proposal had been received at Tokio.

On one other feature of the League of Nations it is necessary, in view of subsequent controversies, to touch briefly. Ever since the final draft of the League Covenant was published its tenth Article has been the object of persistent attack on both sides of the Atlantic. Oddly enough though the article appeared in almost precisely the same form in the first draft it then aroused no antagonism whatever. Its terms are as follows:—

> "The Members of the League undertake to respect and preserve as against external aggression the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all Members of the League. In case of any such aggression, or in case of any threat or danger of such aggression, the Council shall advise upon the means by which this obligation shall be fulfilled."

The vice of the clause, in the eyes of its critics, lies in the fact that it tends to perpetuate the territorial settlement embodied in the Peace Treaty, however bad that settlement may be. The reply to that objection is that the clause immediately following gives full latitude for discussion on, and action in regard to, any circumstance threatening to disturb international peace or a good understanding between nations.

But the history of Article X. is of interest. **In**

President Wilson's original draft it was much longer and more explicit, providing that:—

> "The contracting powers unite in guaranteeing to each other political independence and territorial integrity; but it is understood between them that such territorial readjustments, if any, as may in the future become necessary by reason of changes in present racial conditions and aspirations or present social and political relationships, pursuant to the principle of self-determination, and also such territorial adjustments as may in the judgment of three-fourths of the delegates be demanded by the welfare and manifest interest of the peoples concerned may be effected if agreeable to those people; and that territorial changes may in equity involve material compensation. The contracting powers accept without reservation the principle that the peace of the world is superior in importance to every question of political jurisdiction or boundary."

The difference between the two versions is the difference between the explicit and the implicit, and though in such matters there is considerable advantage in being explicit the two versions are not in any sense at variance. It is of the essence of a mutual alliance that the contracting parties shall undertake to support one another against external aggression, and in admitting that he was himself the author of the clause as it finally stood in the Covenant (he described it, indeed, as "the

very backbone of the whole Covenant") President Wilson made it clear that he regarded the provision as consonant in every way with the principles he had repeatedly laid down.

The Plenary Session of April 28th, at which the Covenant was finally adopted by the Peace Conference, was characteristic of such occasions. The Banqueting Hall at the Quai d'Orsay was crowded, to the defiance of every canon of hygiene, with the delegates at their three long tables with a principal cross-table at the head, with a throng of secretaries and other officials lining the walls, and a compressed mass of journalists of all nations packed tight across the end of the hall. The adoption of the revised Covenant was moved by President Wilson in a speech which, brief though it was, contained two minor surprises, one the appointment of Sir Eric Drummond as Secretary-General of the League, the other the admission of one neutral, Spain, to a seat on the Council. The latter provision evoked an immediate protest, which produced more entertainment than concern, by the Portuguese representative. Then the Conference dragged itself through a purposeless two hours of talk. Most of the delegates were bored. All of them were tired. At the head of the room the "Big Three" diverted themselves in undertones at the expense of the worthy M. Bourgeois, now launched, with the help of what must have been an entirely superfluous sheaf of notes, on the fifth rendering of his speech in support of his famous amendments. In due

course he formally moved them. Twenty minutes later his colleague, M. Pichon, formally withdrew them.

M. Pichon himself had the temerity to propose the admission of the Principality of Monaco as an independent member of the League. M. Clemenceau, conversing cursorily with his next-door neighbour, suddenly sat up. "Who proposes that?" he demanded. "I do," said M. Pichon, "on behalf of the French delegation." "Has it been discussed?" "It has been discussed and there is no opposition." "I oppose it," snapped the President of the Council. M. Pichon subsided, and his amendment vanished as by some sudden disintegration. Baron Makino made his protest on the racial equality amendment. M. Paul Hymans, for Belgium, in a loyal and generous speech expressed his regretful acquiescence in the choice of Geneva rather than Brussels as the permanent seat of the League. The delegate from Uruguay and the delegate from Honduras and the delegate from Panama delivered themselves. Then suddenly, at a few minutes past five, M. Clemenceau rose. "Does anyone else want to speak?" he demanded. "The resolution is moved. Is there any opposition? The resolution is carried." The delegates turned to one another in bewilderment. There was a minute's blank silence. Then Mr. Barnes began to speak to the next item on the agenda, and it dawned on the perplexed assembly that the League of Nations Covenant had been approved, that its Secretary-General had been ap-

pointed, that a Council of the five major Powers, with Belgium, Brazil, Greece and Spain, had been created, that Geneva had been chosen for the League's permanent home, and that a committee had been charged with preparing an agenda for the first meeting of the League Council and Assembly at Washington. With such strange swiftness did what may prove the most powerful political instrument in history leap to birth.

The endorsement of the League Covenant by the Peace Conference and its inclusion in the Treaty with Germany did not end the work of the League of Nations Commission in Paris. The treaty had still to be discussed between the Germans and the Allies, and one of the first acts of the former was to submit to the President of the Peace Conference, who referred it at once to the League Commission for consideration, an alternative constitution for the League. It did not differ greatly from the Allied draft, but it provided for the admission of the enemy states as original members; for the creation of an International Parliament with one representative (up to a maximum of ten) for each million inhabitants of each State; and for equal voting power for every State represented.

These proposals were answered with scrupulous courtesy point by point by the Allies, the nearest approach to a concession being the assurance that certain of them should be brought before the League itself when it came into being. But the League of Nations Commission, which throughout

showed itself far more liberal-minded than the Conference as a whole, created something of a sensation by the advances it was prepared to make towards Germany. The British and American delegates had always been alive to the danger of making the League a mere association of victors in the war. It was true that most of the important neutrals had sent delegates to Paris to discuss the League constitution with the Commission, and that there was a good prospect that almost all of them would join it as soon as possible, but with Russia and Germany and Austria and Hungary out it would form a very incomplete International Society. But the opposition of France and Belgium was strong, and they were supported by considerable elements in Great Britain and America. There was therefore no attempt made, till the Germans specifically raised the question themselves, to secure their early admission to the League.

The German note, however, compelled decision one way or the other, and at a meeting of the Commission held at the Hotel Crillon in the early part of June resolutions were adopted approving the admission of Germany to the League at an early date, with the specific proviso that such admission should carry with it full reciprocity in such matters as the control of international waterways and the regulation of armaments. But Liberalism on that scale was altogether too much for the Council of Four. The League Commission was told in effect to go back and turn out something milder,

which it accordingly did. Whereon the French Press, which for days had been struggling, in the teeth of a relentless censorship, to expose the enormity of the Commission's crimes, began gradually to subside. Germany was formally assured by the Allies that provided she fulfilled certain specified conditions they, the Allies, "see no reason why she should not become a member of the League in the early future."

The League Covenant was embodied in all the treaties with the enemy powers. One effect of that was that China, which refused to sign the German treaty on account of the Shantung clauses, was able to subscribe to the Covenant by signing that with Austria. The League was to come into actual being when ratifications of the Treaty had been deposited by Great Britain, France and Italy. Numerous duties, such as the organisation of the government of the Saar Valley, had been imposed on it by the Peace Conference, which more and more developed the habit of relegating to the League any awkward problem which it failed to settle effectively itself. The question of mandates, responsibility for which was divided rather unsatisfactorily between the League and the Conference, had also to be dealt with at once. It followed that instead of settling gradually to work the League of Nations found itself, the moment ratification had been effected, launched suddenly into mid-career, with all the responsibilities of full maturity on its shoulders.

Chapter X

THE CONFERENCE AND LABOUR

ONE of the few consistently smooth-running, and therefore consistently inconspicuous, pieces of work effected at the Conference was the creation of an international labour organisation. On the workers' side that was no new thing. There had long been an International Federation of Trade Unions in existence, and among individual unions the miners and the textile workers had both carried their organisations outside their own national boundaries. But what was projected at Paris was something much more ambitious, an organisation that should unite representatives of employers, workers and governments from every country in the world, and whose decisions would acquire a moral force that would ensure their incorporation into the system of domestic legislation of each of the constituent nations.

The task of building such an organisation was entrusted by the Conference at its Second Plenary Session, on January 25th, to a commission over which Mr. Gompers, the secretary of the American Federation of Labour, was chosen to preside, Mr. Barnes and Sir Malcolm Delevingne, of the

Home Office, being the British representatives. The defect of the commission was the lack of direct representatives of the workers, though the presence of Mr. Gompers, Mr. Barnes and M. Vandervelde, who were appointed by their several governments, went some way towards rectifying the omission. As far, moreover, as Great Britain was concerned, a strong delegation of trade unionists (including Mr. Henderson, Mr. J. H. Thomas, Mr. Bowerman, Mr. Stuart-Bunning and Mr. Shirkie), summoned to Paris to consult with the official British representatives on the Labour Commission, had a good deal to do with the shaping of the draft on which the commission's final report was largely built.

In attempting to frame regulations, or to provide for the framing of regulations, applying to industrial conditions in countries as diverse as Britain and Japan, America and India, the commission was approaching an almost impossible task. Something of what was aimed at is indicated in the preamble to the final draft of its report, in which the *raison d'être* of the discussions is declared to be the fact that

> "conditions of labour exist, involving such injustice, hardship and privation to large numbers of people as to produce unrest so great that the peace and harmony of the world are imperilled; and an improvement of those conditions is earnestly required: as for example, by the regulation of hours of work, including the

establishment of a maximum working day and week, the regulation of the labour supply, the prevention of unemployment, the provision of an adequate living wage, the protection of the worker against sickness, disease and injury arising out of his employment, the protection of children, young persons and women, provision for old age and injury, protection of the interests of workers when employed in countries other than their own, recognition of the principle of freedom of association, the organisation of vocational and technical education and other measures."

The real motive force behind the whole work was the conviction expressed in the declaration (in the same preamble) that "the failure of any nation to adopt humane conditions of labour is an obstacle in the way of other nations which desire to improve the conditions in their own countries." While anything like the immediate equalisation of labour conditions the world over would have been an unattainable ideal it was possible for the initial step at least to be taken, in a levelling-up process that would go some way towards solving the problem involved in the flooding of European markets by the products of cheap Oriental labour. I discussed with the Japanese member of the Labour Commission and with one of the Chinese plenipotentiaries the question of how far the Commission's recommendations were really applicable to the two countries they themselves

represented. Both of them frankly admitted the difficulties and the length of the road to be travelled from the stage of industrial development at which China and Japan stood at the moment to the elaborated organisation contemplated by the Commission. Both, however, were convinced that the fact of an international standard being thus set would strengthen the hand of their governments and of governments like their own, and effectively promote the passage of domestic legislation designed to improve industrial conditions.

At the same time the Commission had to take cognisance of obvious facts. To have imposed on the constituent nations obligations there was no prospect or possibility of their discharging would have been to stultify the whole undertaking. That point was urged moderately but forcibly by Lord Sinha, speaking on behalf of India at the Plenary Session on April 11th, at which the report of the Labour Commission was presented to the full Peace Conference. The difficulty was met by the proviso (now embodied in Article 405 of the Treaty of Peace with Germany) that "in framing any recommendation or draft convention of general application the Conference shall have due regard to those countries in which climatic conditions, the imperfect development of industrial organisation or other special circumstances make the industrial conditions substantially different, and shall suggest the modifications, if any, which it considers may be required to meet the case of such countries."

The Commission got through its work expeditiously, and its deliberations were convulsed by none of the crises that periodically agitated most of the subsidiary bodies to which the Council of Four relegated particular tasks. The chief difficulty encountered was the discovery made by the European delegates that America could not, under her Constitution, undertake that Congress should ratify or even consider the various recommendations or conventions remitted to it by the International Labour Conference, for the simple reason that in the United States labour laws are enacted in the main by each of the forty-eight separate states, acting quite independently, and not by the Federal Government at all. A way out of that complication was found by providing that where a federal state, whose power to enter into conventions was limited, had a draft convention sent down to it by the Conference it should be at liberty to regard this merely as a recommendation and take its own steps to get the recommendation carried into effect.

The Labour Clauses of the Treaty in their final form were calculated to inspire both satisfaction and disappointment. On paper at least a great deal has been achieved. Provision was made for the establishment at the seat of the League of Nations, and in close association with the League, of an International Labour Office, with a permanent Director and an international governing body, charged with collecting and distributing information on industrial conditions and developments

the world over, and with preparing an agenda for the annual meetings of the full Labour Conference. The lines of procedure for the meetings of the Conference were laid down, providing for the submission by the Conference to the governments of each member nation of either draft conventions for their ratification or recommendations for embodiment in the domestic legislation of the country. The general principles accepted by the Peace Conference as the basis of all future work in the field of International Labour Regulation were expressed in a series of nine points, sufficiently brief and sufficiently important to be quoted in full here. The first of the nine represents a declaration dear to the heart of Mr. Gompers. He had had it included in the Clayton Anti-Trust Act in the United States, and he was responsible for its appearance at the head of the nine articles of the International Labour Charter. Its importance depends on the emphasis thrown on the word "merely," without which it would lend itself to a variety of diverse and uncertain interpretations.

The nine points of the Charter are:—

First.—The guiding principle that labour should not be regarded merely as a commodity or article of commerce.

Second.—The right of association for all lawful purposes by the employed as well as by the employers.

Third.—The payment to the employed of a wage adequate to maintain a reasonable

standard of life, as this is understood in their time and country.

Fourth.—The adoption of an eight hours' day or a forty-eight hours' week as the standard to be aimed at where it has not already been attained.

Fifth.—The adoption of a weekly rest of at least twenty-four hours, which should include Sunday wherever practicable.

Sixth.—The abolition of child labour and the imposition of such limitations on the labour of young persons as shall permit the continuation of their education and assure their proper physical development.

Seventh.—The principle that men and women should receive equal remuneration for work of equal value.

Eighth.—The standard set by law in each country with respect to the conditions of labour should have due regard to the equitable economic treatment of all workers lawfully resident therein.

Ninth.—Each State should make provision for a system of inspection in which women should take part, in order to ensure the enforcement of the laws and regulations for the protection of the employed.

On all those grounds the Labour clauses of the Treaty inspired satisfaction. They inspired disappointment in that they made provision for nothing more tangible than an abstract expression of

opinion on the part of the International Labour Conference. The Conference could hold its annual meetings, discuss subjects of the highest importance, arrive at possibly unanimous conclusions, and then be powerless to do more than place those conclusions before the Governments of the individual states for adoption or rejection. That meant that the Conference would have considerably less authority in the industrial world than the League of Nations in the political. Nations associating themselves with the League did at least pledge themselves to observe its findings when those findings were unanimous. Nations joining the International Labour Conference gave no such undertaking. They retained full liberty to read through the recommendations of the Conference, bring them formally before the legislative authority in their country, and then dismiss them from further consideration.

Mr. Barnes, when challenged as to whether the Conference could in fact do more than enunciate admirable sentiments, was constrained to admit that technically it could not. But he was perfectly justified in his contention that recommendations coming with all the moral force attaching to a resolution backed by at least two-thirds of the members of the International Conference would command the very serious attention of every legislature before which they were brought. The fact is that the International Labour Conference, like the League of Nations itself, will prove itself by its work. It will be what it makes itself. If the

Governments associated with it resolve that it shall be what it might be, and appoint to it the sanest and ablest representatives they have at their command, its decisions will, as the Labour member of the British War Cabinet claimed, acquire a moral force that will go far to compensate for their lack of binding authority.

The Germans, on receiving the draft Peace Treaty on May 7th, applied themselves with particular diligence to the study of the labour clauses. That was not surprising, for labour conditions in Germany have long been superior on the average to those in most Allied countries, and Germany's experience in that field fully entitled her to express herself on the shaping of a permanent International Labour organisation. Three days after their receipt of the Treaty, the German delegates at Versailles made the labour clauses the subject of formal representations to the Allies. They submitted an alternative draft of an agreement on labour questions, suggested with some justice that the views of the workers found inadequate expression in the Allied draft, urged with much reason that all nations should join in the labour agreement, whether they were members of the League of Nations or not, and proposed as a practical measure that an International Congress of Workers should be summoned to meet forthwith at Versailles, taking as a basis the decisions of the International Trade Union Conference (it was in point of fact an International Socialist Conference) held at Berne a few months before.

An arrière pensée was pretty clearly traceable in these proposals, whatever their intrinsic merit. Germany was well aware that the workers in Allied countries were less hostile to her than other classes of the community, and a workers' conference at Versailles at the very moment the modification of the Treaty terms was under discussion could hardly fail to be to her advantage.

On that or other grounds M. Clemenceau returned to the German representations what is conventionally known as a reasoned reply which consisted of a decorous but decided rejection of the several proposals. On one point, however, a concession was subsequently made. It was manifestly to everyone's interest that Germany should be bound from the first by any engagements entered into by other nations on labour questions. Several neutrals, moreover, indicated that they would not join in the Washington Conference in October if Germany was excluded. The Allies could not raise themselves to the pitch of courage or magnanimity entailed in formally inviting Germany to send representatives to Washington. It was therefore solemnly intimated that, while no definite invitation would be extended, if Germany cared to send delegates to America about the time of the Conference they would be permitted to land, and it would then be for the Conference itself to decide whether they should take part in the deliberations. Of which triumph of statesmanship it may be observed that it is in every way worthy of the body from which it emanated.

Chapter XI

THE FEEDING OF EUROPE

IN Mr. Herbert Hoover's room at the Hotel Crillon there hung a remarkable map that told a great story. It was a map of Europe, which the officials of the United States Food Administration had scored with their signs. Beginning at the extreme left-hand margin of the map, somewhere out in Mid-Atlantic, there was marked out a series of steamship routes, each of them starting from an American port, each of them directed to the coast of some half-starved European Nation. In the area of what was known as the Northern Relief fell Finland, the Baltic States (Esthonia, Latvia and Lithuania), Poland, Czecho-Slovakia (so far as it was reached by the Elbe, not by the Adriatic), Germany and Belgium. In the Southern Relief fell Austria, Czecho-Slovakia (so far as it was reached by the Adriatic, not by the Elbe), Hungary, Jugo-Slavia, Bulgaria, Rumania and Turkey.

Along those black lines the food ships sped their ceaseless way, bearing of the abundance of America to relieve the necessity of Europe. The routes were spaced out in average day's runs and each ship was marked by a little flag that moved

on the map as the ship it stood for moved in the ocean, reporting its position morning by morning to Room 219 at the Crillon. The shape of the flag meant one thing and the colour of it meant another. There was one colour for a milk cargo, another for wheat and rye, another for peas and beans, and so forth. You could trace a northern line running up the British Channel, across the North Sea, up the Rhine for Germany, or up the Elbe for Czecho-Slovakia, or through the Kiel Canal and the Baltic for Dantzig, or still further on to the Gulf of Finland, into Abo or Helsingfors, the little flags pegging themselves along a couple of hundred miles or so each day, till they came to rest at last in the harbour where the freight was to go ashore.

The southerly flags moved likewise, one working up the Adriatic to Spalato or Fiume or Trieste, another dropping off as early as Palermo, another little argosy running up under Gallipoli and on to Varna or Constanza, or furrowing the length of the Black Sea to Batoum. There were other maps of not less interest—one in particular showing the Food Commission's wonderful network of telegraphs—and other points of not less interest on this map, but enough has perhaps been said to convey some idea of the complexity and comprehensiveness of the organisation the Allies, and America foremost among them, constructed in the early months of 1919.

Strictly speaking the Food Commission was not part of the Conference at all. The business

of the Conference was to restore peace to the world. The business of the Commission was to keep a great part of the world from dying before peace had been restored. An Inter-Allied organisation for joint purchase and allocation had been at work long before the end of the war, but with the armistice its functions changed. Not merely the Allied countries but the former enemy States, almost all in a condition of pitiable impoverishment, had to be considered. The old organisation was remodelled to meet the new needs, Lord Reading and Sir John Beale, then Secretary of the Ministry of Food, taking a leading part in the work of the British side.

But the undertaking was not set on a permanent footing till the formation of the Supreme Economic Council, brought into being by a resolution of the Supreme War Council moved by President Wilson early in February. The new body was given full control over questions of finance, food, blockade and control of shipping and raw materials for the period of the armistice. Lord Robert Cecil was the chief British representative, and Mr. Hoover the chief American. So far as the relief of starvation was concerned it was administered on two principles. Germany had to pay for the food she wanted. In other cases receipts were taken and full accounts kept. The American Congress voted a hundred million dollars and the British Treasury allocated twelve million pounds for free relief, Sir William Goode having charge of the administration of the British fund. In

April, the scope of the Council was broadened, various existing Inter-Allied bodies being brought under its ultimate control. By the time it had been at work a few months a conclusive case had been established for its perpetuation on a permanent basis in close association with the League of Nations. In August its sphere was accordingly still further widened, the organisation being placed on an international instead of a purely Inter-Allied footing. Its authority in the economic field in the future will be a factor of material importance in the relationships of nations.

But during the Peace Conference the control of the Supreme Economic Council was in the hands of the Allies alone. Its leading figure on the administrative side was Mr. Hoover. On the deliberative that rôle was shared between the American Food Controller and Lord Robert Cecil. It is worth while recording in that connection a significant incident which threw a striking light on the ascendancy established by Lord Robert Cecil at Paris. It was agreed at the outset that a representative of each of the four principal States participating should preside over meetings of the Council in turn.

Great Britain was given first place, and Lord Robert Cecil accordingly took the chair at the first meeting. At the second, Mr. Hoover should have presided, but he turned to Lord Robert and asked him to act in his place. At the third, M. Clémentel, the French Minister of Commerce, exercised his right and occupied the chairman's seat.

At the fourth, Signor Crespi, the Italian representative, asked permission to waive his claim in favour of Lord Robert. That completed the first round. The second, which then began, differed from it only in the fact that on this occasion the French representative fell into line with his American and Italian colleagues. From that time Lord Robert Cecil presided as a matter of course over the meetings of the Council whenever he was present.

By the time the Council had got well to work it had covered Europe with a marvellous network of relief agencies, established and directed by administrators, for the most part American and British, appointed by, and perpetually in touch with, Paris. As soon as the war was over President Wilson instructed General Pershing to put at Mr. Hoover's disposal any army officer the Director-General of Relief might desire. Of that arrangement Mr. Hoover took full advantage. An officer spending a week's leave in Paris would find himself stopped in the street by a Food Administration official with whom he had some small acquaintance, and challenged as to why he should not get off forthwith to organise food distribution in some remote spot in the far East of Europe. He would protest that he knew nothing of the work or the place or the people or the language. No matter. He was the man for the job. Someone was wanted and he was the someone. He would beg a few hours to consider, then ring up to ask what clothes he ought to take with him.

Then he would vanish out of sight and out of knowledge till some chance traveller from that quarter of the globe turned up one day in Paris to tell how Hoover's man there was keeping a whole population alive.

It was by such swift and decisive methods that the food organisation—actually it concerned itself with many other things than food, notably coal, shipping and raw material—was built up. The American Congress in voting its hundred million dollars had excluded Germany and Austria from benefit. The American Relief Administration therefore left those countries alone. Great Britain took Austria in hand, and Germany was able to pay, partly in gold, partly in commodities, such as potash, for the food the Allies were prepared to have shipped to her. France and Italy were fully represented on the Supreme Economic Council, but they took a less prominent part than the Anglo-Saxon powers in the work of local administration. Italy indeed deserves much credit for the public spirit with which she rushed consignments of her own military stores into Austria at a critical moment, though that particular example of magnanimity was more than counter-balanced by the obstructions she offered at a rather later date to the transport of food to the Southern Slavs.

The number of lives preserved by the Allies' relief schemes is quite beyond computation, but it runs unquestionably into several millions. But even that touched only the edge of the problem presented by the incalculable need of Europe. Of

what that need really meant only the Relief Administration, in perpetual touch as it was with the distress zones of the whole continent, had an adequate conception; but the constant flow of travellers, administrators, soldiers, politicians and others into Paris, each with his personal story of what he knew of the tragedy of this town or country or that, kept the Conference as a whole in some degree sensible of what the tarrying of peace involved in the perpetuation of instability, and consequently of arrested production, and consequently of starvation. No one painted a more vivid picture of the conditions under which populations of millions were living than General Smuts, on his return from Vienna and Buda-Pesth in April. In one of the German colonial wars in South-West Africa, he recounted, the settlers determined with characteristic barbarity to exterminate a whole native tribe. They did it by driving out men, women and children into the desert and cutting off their access to the only waterholes. A Boer from the Transvaal who rode out into the desert came on three of the victims, a woman and two children, sitting huddled in the sand, blank, inert, hopeless. They were doing nothing to save themselves. There was nothing to do. They simply sat waiting for the death that closed inevitably upon them. That, General Smuts said, was the impression all he saw of Central Europe made on him. It was a land of men sunk in despair, men incapable of effort even if

any effort would avail, a land of people waiting for death.

The task of the Allies was not merely to relieve the immediate necessities of Europe, but to enable Europe somehow to stand by itself. Mr. Hoover's appointment, and the staff he had collected, and the money he had to spend, all came to an end technically on June 30th, 1919, though he had succeeded in accumulating enough stocks to bridge the short interval between then and the reaping of the European harvest. In any case he was as emphatic on the need for schooling every nation to manage its own economic affairs as he was in his denunciation of the blockade, whose continuance right down to the conclusion of peace unceasingly obstructed his efforts. I discussed both subjects with him more than once during the last three months of his administration. The maintenance of the blockade as a military safeguard, he pointed out, was sheer futility, since with the British Fleet in occupation of the Baltic, and Allied armies holding the Rhine bridgeheads, an absolutely watertight blockade could at any moment be reimposed at twenty-four hours' notice. The so-called peasant blockade, consisting of the refusal of the peasants to sell food to the towns in return for worthless paper money, in such countries as Hungary and Austria was a serious enough obstacle in itself, but when it was accentuated by the external blockade maintained by the Allies the position was changed from bad

to desperate. It was true that even with open frontiers not much could be effected by a nation with no purchasing power, but Germany at any rate was in a position to raise certain credits abroad for the purchase of raw materials that would give work to some part at least of her idle and hungry population.

The connection between starvation and revolution is obvious. A people naturally looks to its government to give it food, and if the government proves powerless to discharge that elemental function its last claim to support disappears. The Supreme Economic Council was perpetually fighting revolution with food. Again and again, when the political condition of some particular country was under discussion, the declaration would be made by men personally cognisant of the facts that it was all a question of whether food could be rushed in in time to preserve stability. Rumania was considered to have been saved from chaos by that means. A leading Italian with whom I was discussing the insurgent Socialist movement in this country told me there would be revolution if the Allies could not find Italy the food and fuel she needed. It all depended on that. Mr. Hoover himself was a convinced believer in food as the one effective antidote to Bolshevism, and in every country where there was a government with any reasonable show of authority he made it an invariable rule that that government should be put in formal control of the food distribution, though the actual work was pretty sure to be carried out

by the Food Administration's own officers. It was a profound disappointment to the Director-General of Relief that he was not able to put his theory to the proof in Russia.

The problems Mr. Hoover left for solution when his own work at last came to its end were as much problems of transport and finance and distribution as of the supply of the actual food. I asked him what Europe had to look forward to when all he had been doing was being done no more. His hope then was that by the beginning of 1920 conditions would be sufficiently settled for sowing and reaping to go forward normally in most of the countries till then dependent on outside assistance. Some of them, like Belgium and Austria, never grew enough to meet more than a third or a quarter of their needs, and in such cases it would be for the Allies to arrange credits for the purchase of food from elsewhere. The basic fact was that there was food in the world for everyone if it could be acquired, transported and distributed in the interests of those who needed it.

The section of relief work that showed the best promise of permanence was the feeding of children. By June, 1919, no fewer than four million children were being fed on special dietaries all over Europe, the funds being provided mainly by charitable effort in the Allied countries, and the distribution resting with local committees organised in the first instance by the Food Administration's officials. Mr. Hoover had had experience of that work long before in Belgium, and

when he visited that country with President Wilson before the latter's return to America the roads everywhere were lined with what were known as Hoover's babies, because they would never have been alive at all if it had not been for Mr. Hoover.

The Director-General of Relief was in some respects the greatest personality in Paris, President Wilson himself not excepted. The two men were in curious contrast. Mr. Wilson is probably the greatest orator in America. Mr. Hoover is not far from being the worst. The one is an idealist in word as well as thought, the other in thought and deed but hardly ever in word. At one meeting of the experts of the American Commission, presided over by Mr. Wilson, Mr. Hoover observed with regard to some question under discussion, "After all, Mr. President, we must consider the expediency of that course." The President straightened in his chair. "Hoover," he said, "expediency is a word that must never be used between you and me."

No work was ever carried out with less parade and advertisement than the relief of Europe. Mr. Hoover himself has something like a terror of publicity. He believes in deeds and has no belief in talk. He is practical, executive, determined. Englishmen who crossed swords with him during the war, when they were representing Great Britain and he America in connection with international bargains, saw him in a wholly new light when they laid their shoulders to the same wheel

with him in Paris. "On the whole I think he's the biggest man here," one of them with exceptional opportunities of watching his work said to me just before that work came to an end. It was the truth, or something very near it, but not many people even in Paris ever grasped it. The Director-General of Relief kept far too much in the background for that.

Chapter XII

WHAT CAME OF IT ALL

THE first and the chief tangible result of the five months' discussions at Paris was the Treaty signed by sixty-six representatives of the Allies and two of Germany in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles, on June 28th.

As the climax of the great drama of four-and-a-half years of war and the half-year of the building of peace the signing of the Treaty was an event in the strictest sense historic. As a spectacle the ceremony was frankly a disappointment. All its concomitants, as well as all the underlying facts, should have conspired to make it memorable. In the actual event it was not merely not impressive, not merely not dignified, it was not even orderly.

Yet all the elements of the impressive were there. The stately gallery in which the ceremony was carried out is eloquent with memories. Among them all one dominated the mind. Here in 1871 the German Empire was proclaimed. Here in 1919 the defeat of that Empire's tyrannous endeavour was being written into the annals of world history.

In the figure of one man beyond all others that memory was concentrated. Who could forget that

when the German guns were thundering round Paris forty-nine years before the Mayor of Montmartre was a young doctor named Georges Clemenceau? This was Clemenceau's day. Well might he exclaim, "Nine and forty years have I waited for this." Well might the crowds gathered on the Château terrace look up in unsatisfied expectation at the balcony and cry "Clemenceau!" till Clemenceau came out from a lower doorway into their midst.

When the session was opened only two seats were vacant—those of Mr. Liu Cheng-hsiang and Mr. Wang Cheng-ting, the Chinese delegates, who had decided they could not sign a Treaty which embodied in the Shantung settlement what they regarded as a gross injustice to their country. The gallery by this time was crowded with a throng for the most part sober-vested. There were, indeed, few touches of colour anywhere, apart from the rich paintings with which the ceiling of the Hall of Mirrors is adorned. A splash of red here and there marking the tabs of British Staff Officers, the scarlet crests that topped the plumed helmets of the Garde Républicaine, the sky-blue uniforms of a handful of French officers, alone gave relief from the prevalent sombre black.

The Germans entered the Hall from the end adjacent to the Salon de la Paix. They had been awaited with a curiosity which there was nothing to repay. They were dressed, like the Allied delegates, in correct frock or morning coats. They walked normally to their seats, and sat normally

in them when they had got there. None the less, they provided indirectly the first surprise of the afternoon, for it fell to them, and not to M. Clemenceau or President Wilson, to set the first signature at the foot of the Treaty. That arrangement was indicated in the President of the Conference's brief opening speech. The Treaty, he stated, was before them. He guaranteed it to be a faithful replica of that handed to the Germans twelve days ago, and he called on the German delegates to sign it.

When Prof. Mantoux had repeated this invitation in English Herr Müller, the German Foreign Minister, and Herr Bell, rose from their seats at the cross table far on Monsieur Clemenceau's left, filed round to the four small tables in the interior of the "horseshoe," where M. William Martin was supervising the signature of the four documents that embodied the agreements of the Conference, and duly affixed their signatures.

When—no longer as enemy delegates—they had regained their seats a long procession of the Allies, headed by the President of the United States, began. With his four colleagues—Mr. Lansing, Mr. Henry White (who was in Paris through 1870 and 1871, when the Prussians trained their guns from Versailles on the capital), Col. House and General Tasker Bliss—Mr. Wilson, looking neither elevated nor grave, but merely businesslike, led the way round the end of the long horseshoe and set his name to all four Treaties. Thus by a striking and, as destiny may

shape it, a prophetic symbolism, it fell to the great New World nation to set its name at the very head of the signatories of the instrument designed to heal the Old World's conflict.

The Americans were followed by the British. It was seventeen minutes past three when Mr. Lloyd George, looking essentially brisk and cheerful, made his way to the signing table. Mr. Bonar Law, who followed him, was dour, Mr. Balfour smiling almost to the point of hilarity, Lord Milner impassive, and Mr. Barnes benign. Behind them came the Dominion delegates in order. After the British Empire, France, headed by Mr. Clemenceau; after France, Italy, still represented by her old delegates, Baron Sonnino, Signor Crespi, and the Marquis Imperiali; and after Italy, Japan.

Then followed an unending train of eminently respectable black-coated figures, following the appointed route and apparently interesting no one except when the black coat happened to enshroud so familiar a personality as that of M. Vénisélos or M. Paderewski, or to be matched by a visage of like hue, as in the case of the delegate from Liberia. So on to the delegate for Uruguay, who added his signature at exactly eleven minutes to four. Immediately M. Clemenceau rose and declared the Treaty duly signed and the Session ended, what may live as the greatest Treaty in history having thus been signed by every delegate in the Hall in well under fifty minutes.

Ten minutes later was enacted by far the most striking scene of the day. On the terrace at the

back of the Château, overlooking the splendid sweep of water and turf stretching away to the far end of the Grand Canal, a crowd of guests had assembled to call for "Clemenceau." The French Prime Minister was sought in vain at the balcony above, but five minutes later he emerged with President Wilson and Mr. Lloyd George on a rash pilgrimage to see the fountains play. No preparation had been made to clear a way, and the crowd, overjoyed, surged wildly round the three statesmen. Two or three officials gesticulated in despair. Odd groups of poilus tried to hedge back the throng with barriers of rifles, only to be swept impotent aside.

By a progress in which volition played little part the three reached the top of the sweep of steps leading down to the Basin of Latona, where the fountains were celebrating the great day with their classic symbolism of joy. There the human wave spent its force, and the President and the two Prime Ministers were left the central figures in a tableau that no artist in ceremonial could have devised half so well. Far away below and beyond, like an alley cut through the rich verdure of the park, stretched first the long sward of the Tapis Vert, now no longer green, but black with massed humanity; beyond that the Basin of Apollo, and beyond again the Grand Canal, its surface dotted with scores of laden boats. Suddenly, from a battery hidden close in a hollow on the left, the boom of cannon roared out, while overhead a squadron of aeroplanes droned in a sombre

but rainless sky. The three statesmen were not aloof from the crowd but of it. Back to the Château they had literally to fight their way. At one moment I was within an ace of being precipitated myself into the midst of the Council of Three. Mr. Lloyd George laughed as if he remembered Birmingham. President Wilson's teeth gleamed in his characteristic smile. M. Clemenceau, with one or two supporters to clear the path, kept his course unmoved. Most essentially it was Clemenceau's day.

What was the effect of the document for whose signature the greatest concourse of statesmen known to history had assembled?* It constituted a League of Nations from which Germany was for the time being excluded. It confiscated all German colonies. It gave parts of German territory (Alsace-Lorraine) to France; put parts (the Saar Valley) temporarily, and part (Dantzig) permanently, under the League of Nations; gave parts (Posen and a portion of West Prussia) to Poland; severed an outlying part (East Prussia) from physical connection with Germany altogether; gave parts (Moresnet, Eupen and Montmédy) to Belgium; and submitted the fate of parts (Upper Silesia, Schleswig, portions of West Prussia and probably Memel) to plebiscites.

It demilitarised the whole of the left bank, and a belt of fifty kilometres on the right bank, of the Rhine. It reduced the German army to a hundred thousand long-service men, and the fleet

* Full summary in Appendix I., p. 207.

to little more than a squadron, with a personnel of fifteen thousand; it prohibited the retention or construction of any naval or military aircraft and vetoed the construction even of commercial aircraft for six months.

It provided for the payment by Germany of £1,000,000,000 by 1921 as the first instalment of an indemnity, the balance to be assessed by an Inter-Allied Reparation Commission working in consultation with a parallel German commission. It required the cession by Germany, as a contribution in kind towards the indemnity, of consignments of coal to France (over and above the Saar Valley yield, which was handed over in perpetuity), Belgium and Italy for a term of years, of dyestuffs and drugs to the Allies as a whole, of all German merchant ships over 1,600 tons, half the total number between 1,600 and 1,000 tons, a quarter of the trawlers and fishing vessels, and in addition the construction of 1,000,000 tons of shipping for the Allies.

It gave the Allies occupation of the left bank of the Rhine for fifteen years as guarantee of payment, with provision on the one hand for progressive evacuation as instalments came in, and on the other for re-occupation either during or after the specified period in the event of Germany refusing to observe the whole or part of her obligations in regard to reparation. It internationalised various German rivers, it gave Allied aviators free flying rights over German soil, it required Germany to build canals at the request of

other Powers and to grant transit free of duty to Allied goods through her territory.

It forbade any union between Germany and Austria without the consent of the Council of the League of Nations (on which any single nation could impose an effective veto). It stipulated for the surrender of the ex-Kaiser and other war criminals to the Allies, and it required Germany to admit formally in regard to Russia the same liabilities she accepted in regard to the other Allies.

Those were, as Mr. Lloyd George said later in the House of Commons, terrible terms. As he said further, they had to be terrible terms. There were plenty of critics in England and France, and some in America, who thought they were not terrible enough. Liberal opinion on the other hand was frankly startled at the Treaty read as a whole. Its main provisions had become generally known as they were recommended by the several commissions and adopted by the Conference, but the cumulative force of clause after clause, penalty after penalty, restriction after restriction, came as something altogether new. As much complaint was made of the pinpricks and irritations the Treaty contained as of its main provisions, drastic as the latter were. The studied absence of all reciprocity in the case of requirements laudable in themselves (*e.g.* freedom of through transit for goods, or the internationalisation of rivers serving more than one country); the exclusion of Germany from the League of Na-

tions and the demand for the surrender (to replace animals seized) of 140,000 milch cows to France and Belgium at a time when German children were dying and French and Belgian children were being provided for,—these were the features of the Treaty on which delegates who recognised as necessary the general rigour of the terms directed their criticism. Among the major provisions the forcible, even though only temporary, severance of the Saar Valley from Germany, the transference of the whole of the German colonies to the Allies, the annexation to Poland of districts claimed to be predominantly German, were the occasion of serious misgiving to many members of the Allied delegations. The Note in which Count Brockdorff-Rantzau demonstrated the economic effects of the Treaty on Germany* has already been quoted. The justice of its contentions was admitted without reserve by one of the highest financial authorities among the Allies.

Of the Allied plenipotentiaries General Smuts declared that he signed the Treaty not because he considered it satisfactory, but because it was imperatively necessary to close the war. General Botha was known to be in complete agreement with his South African colleague's manifesto,† and so to my knowledge were other signatories of the Treaty, both British and American. But the war had to be closed, as General Smuts had said. Only a Treaty could close it, and Europe was slip-

* See Appendix, p. 217.
† See Appendix, p. 219.

ping too fast into dissolution to incline anyone to run the risks attendant on remodelling this particular Treaty at the cost of still further delay. President Wilson among others was convinced that the document must be signed with all its imperfections, and signed forthwith. There were those, on the other hand, who would have gladly seen it torn up. It is difficult to believe they had any consciousness of the reality of the situation in Europe.

The second visible result of the Conference discussions was the Treaty with Austria, handed to Dr. Renner and his colleagues at St. Germain, on June 2nd, signed by them in the same hall on September 10th, and ratified by the Austrian National Assembly at Vienna, on October 17th. The Allies had at first taken the view that the treatment meted out to Germany could be meted out, *mutatis mutandis,* to Austria. If nothing but the political settlement had mattered that theory might have worked well enough. But one of the lessons the survey of the world incidental to the Paris discussions inculcated beyond all others was that in the affairs of men in the twentieth century politics were ever less and less and economics ever more and more. The impoverishment the war had brought had taught men that their first thought in life must be how to live at all. To have first applied to the old Austro-Hungarian Empire the rules of self-determination and then attempted to extract from what was left of Austria proper an indemnity based on such princi-

ples as were approved in the case of Germany would have been to attempt the frankly impossible. That discovery the Allies ultimately made, though not till they had wasted a great deal of valuable time in trying to do what manifestly could not be done. One result of their fitful endeavours was the parcelling out of the Treaty into sections, which were handed to the Austrians one by one over an interval of months as they could be agreed on at Paris.

The main effect of the Treaty in its final form* was to reduce the nation that had once been the predominant partner in an Empire of seventy million people to a small inland republic of perhaps seven million all told. The Dual Monarchy was broken up for ever. Hungary was left for separate treatment—Bela Kun was still obstinately in possession at Buda-Pesth, and the Allies refused to deal with Bela Kun—but Austria itself, cut off from the sea by the grant of independence to its subject nationalities or the transfer of its former territory to Italy, knew by the beginning of June to what a state its crimes and follies in 1914 had brought it. The old Austria, as the world knew it before the war, lost Bohemia and Moravia, united in the now independent State of Czecho-Slovakia; it lost the Trentino, the Trieste region and part of the Tyrol to Italy; it lost the whole of Dalmatia to either the new State of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes or to Italy; it lost Galicia, the ultimate fate of which was not

* Full summary in Appendix II., p. 214.

decided by the Treaty, except in the negative sense that it would no longer be Austrian; while the destiny of the district of Klagenfurt was to be determined by plebiscite as between Austria and the Serb-Croat-Slovene State.

The military terms were drastic. The army was to be reduced within three months of the coming into force of the Treaty to 30,000 men, all volunteers. Navy and air forces were to disappear altogether, the former vanishing naturally in view of the fact that Austria no longer had a foot of coast under her rule or a ton of shipping on the sea. The Danube, from Ulm, in Bavaria, down to the point at which the jurisdiction of the former Danube Commission began, was to be internationalised, and Austria was to be deprived of her representation on the Danube Commission. She was required to approve the Covenant of the League of Nations, but was herself excluded from membership of the League. She was forbidden to describe herself as German-Austria, or the German-Austrian Republic, and was prohibited from effecting any union with Germany except with the consent of the Council of the League of Nations.

The economic clauses of the Treaty practically constituted an admission on the part of the Allies of the impossibility of imposing any specific indemnity on Austria. No one knew what she could pay. It was manifest that her capacity to pay anything at all was inconsiderable. The only thing the Allies could do was to require her to

sign a blank cheque. They provided for a Reparation Commission charged with extracting from Austria, in gold or in kind, "a reasonable sum" before May, 1921, and with assessing annual payments for thirty years from that date. The problem was complicated not only by the utter impoverishment of the new Austria, but by the fact that the old Austro-Hungarian debt had to be equitably redistributed among the states into which the Dual Monarchy was now resolved.

Altogether it might be said of Austria, as was said of Germany, that she was being compelled to submit to terrible terms, but that the terms had to be terrible. At the ceremony of the presentation of the first part of the Treaty to the Austrian delegates at St. Germain, Dr. Renner, the Chancellor of the new republic, had made a strong plea for generous treatment. He emphasised the distinction between the old order and the new in Austria, between the responsibility resting on the former Austro-Hungarian Government and that resting on the new people's republic, dwelt on the sufferings of the population since the Armistice as a result of the severance of their mountainous country from the regular sources of food supply, and insisted on the importance to the Allies of listening to the Austrians as well as to the other former subjects of the Dual Monarchy before reaching final conclusions on the rights and wrongs of the political situation.

The Chancellor was persuasive, as all who heard him at St. Germain agreed. But the gov-

erning fact in the situation was that merely to do justice to the races entitled to their independence, without any thought of reparation or indemnity, would mean imposing on Austria almost impossible economic conditions. Vienna was a baffling problem in itself. Down to 1914 it had thriven largely on industries incidental to its position as the centre and the seat of government of an empire of seventy millions. Now it was to be the capital of a state far smaller in population than Belgium. There were no raw materials in the country, other than timber, out of which to develop industries. Altogether the Austrian Treaty created for the Allies economically at least as many problems as it solved. The feeding of Vienna and other cities had to be taken in hand by the Supreme Economic Council, and there was no indication as to when that charity could cease, though as an Allied economist observed genially to an Austrian delegate at St. Germain, the Allies could not go on paying an indemnity to Austria for ever.

The territorial settlement is distinctly open to criticism at certain points, notably in the transfer of the Southern Tyrol to Italy to give the latter a strategic frontier. But in a country where races are so inextricably intermingled it is impossible to define frontiers with complete justice on the lines of self-determination. President Wilson, for example, told me he had received a deputation of Slovenes from a little enclave in what was for the future to be Italian territory. Their

protest was perfectly intelligible, but you cannot put ring fences round such little enclaves, and all that was possible was to assure the deputation that the League of Nations would be specially charged with safeguarding the interests of such communities as theirs. As a matter of fact an attempt was made to safeguard the interests of racial minorities by the inclusion in the Treaty of special provisions designed for the protection of such minorities in the territories passing into the hands of the Rumanians and the Serb-Croat-Slovenes. Those provisions caused bitter offence to the two nations in question, though a similar undertaking had been given by Poland, where the Jewish question was particularly urgent. As a consequence both Rumania and the Serb-Croat-Slovene State were at the time these lines were written still persisting in their refusal to sign the Austrian Treaty.

Eleven months after the Armistice only the German and Austrian treaties had been negotiated. That with Bulgaria had indeed been handed to the Bulgarian delegates. It cut the Bulgarian State off from all physical access to the Ægean, though economic access was secured her through one of three specified ports. It gave small areas to the Serb-Croat-Slovene State and transferred Western Thrace to the Allies for subsequent disposition. It reduced the army to 30,000, and abolished the navy and air forces altogether. It imposed reparation payments to the extent of £90,000,000, extending over a period of

twenty-eight years. The worst part of the settlement was the boxing-in of Bulgaria by the transfer to other hands of the whole of her Ægean coast line. But the whole economic and ethnical problem in the Balkans is of a complexity which defies any hope of a satisfactory and enduring settlement, unless the League of Nations can effect such adjustments as much more mature study than the Peace Conference was able to give may prove necessary.

After the Bulgarian Treaty there remained the Hungarian and the Turkish. The Hungarian was drawn up waiting for a stable government to come into being at Buda-Pesth, and to all appearance it might wait a considerable time. The Turkish settlement was held in abeyance while America reached a decision on the question of accepting a mandate for any part of the old Turkish Empire.

What had come of it all, then, close on a year after fighting technically ceased, was the signature of treaties with Germany and Austria. Three other treaties, with Bulgaria, Hungary and Turkey, remained to be signed. War, supported largely by the supplies and munitions furnished by the Allies, was still raging in Russia from Omsk to the Polish frontier and from Archangel to the Black Sea. The gleam of hope on the horizon was the fact that the League of Nations had at last come into being. To the question, what came of it all, the first answer ought perhaps to be the League of Nations. But that must be proved

by the future. The League enters on a heritage that may well daunt its most confident apostles. Its strength, apart from the prestige and capacity of the men chosen to direct it, is that if the League of Nations fails the only visible hope of reknitting the world into unity will have vanished. And the attempt that has carried the League so far as it has gone on its journey can never be renewed if failure attends it now.

Chapter XIII

AND NOW—?

AND now the hope of the future rests with the League of Nations. The war is over. The Treaties so far signed are on record. Treaties were essential. Even treaties as imperfect as those signed at Versailles and St. Germain were better than a continuance either of the war itself or of the uncertainty and instability ruling during the Armistice.

But the treaties in themselves are no guarantees of peace. They have disarmed Germany and Austria, but they have left the struggle in Russia unaffected, and they have been the direct cause of sporadic outbreaks of hostilities all over South-Eastern Europe between countries or factions dissatisfied with the settlement they embodied. In September, 1919, ten months after the Armistice, a Paris paper published a map showing twenty-five several fronts where it was alleged wars were then in progress. Treaties alone, it was clear, could bring no peace.

More than that, there is a serious danger that the treaties may contain the actual seeds of war if they are to be regarded as the last word the statesmanship of the world can pronounce on the prob-

lems of which they treat. No one who saw the Paris Conference as it was, who watched the new ideals of the White House being shelved tacitly and with hardly a protest in favour of the old theories of balance of power, of strategic frontiers and of territorial extension, could have hoped to find in the document that emerged from such discussions anything more than an instrument that would give the world a short breathing space, that would let the heats and fumes of war clear away, leaving a purer air in which dispassionate justice (President Wilson's "impartial justice," involving "no discrimination between those to whom we wish to be just and those to whom we do not wish to be just") could do its healing work.

That remedial process needs an effective instrument to carry it out. The treaties themselves provide no such instrument. The commissions they constitute are confined to particular functions—the exaction of reparation, the demarcation of boundaries, the administration of special areas like the Saar Valley—which leave the main purpose of the treaties unaffected. There is one institution alone, the League of Nations, capable of taking the world the treaties have left and remoulding it as changing political and economic needs may demand. The League as constituted to-day has grave defects, some inevitable, some remediable. Its success depends on the goodwill of its members. If each nation adhering to the League devotes its energies, as a number of re-

putedly rational critics seem seriously to assume that it will, to seeking out any flaw or loophole that will enable it to evade its obligations and thwart the considered purpose of the League, nothing but disaster and failure can lie ahead. Even with the goodwill every member of the League is justified in expecting from every other, difficulties enough are certain to arise. The exclusion of the late enemy Powers will greatly curtail both the actual and the theoretical authority of the League till the omission is rectified, as there is ground for thinking it may be at an early date. The exclusion of Russia is a misfortune not less serious, and one with no immediate hope of remedy. The provision requiring the unanimous assent of the Assembly to all decisions of moment leaves room for infinite obstruction on the part of any member with no higher sense of purpose in the world than to obstruct. The demand of America, as presented by the Republican majority in the Senate, for what amounts in certain regards to a position of privilege within the League, is a disquieting omen.

But with all such defects, and others that could be added, the League of Nations is to-day the sole bulwark against chaos in world-relations. The single visible alternative is the Socialist International, but to assume the efficacy of the International in face of the problems that impend is to assume a Socialist revolution, constitutional or unconstitutional, throughout the world. The men who would represent their countries on the In-

ternational do not in Britain or America or France or Italy or Japan control either foreign or domestic policy. They could give effect to none of the reciprocal undertakings into which they would have to enter. The Socialist International is, and promises long to remain, sectional. It will have its peculiar work to perform, as it has to-day. It may do much to bind nations closer, by binding parts of each nation closer. But as an alternative to the League of Nations it is not relevant. The only international council that will serve the need of the world is a council of national representatives authorised to commit the governments for which they speak (subject to the provisions of national constitutions) to the decisions they take. That the League of Nations as its exists to-day does provide for, and it is a provision of vast moment in the evolution of the world.

One other alternative to the League is indeed envisaged in some quarters. There are cynics in abundance in every Allied country who dismiss the League of Nations as at best an amiable vision and call insistently for the perpetuation of the armed organisation represented by the Alliance that won the war. Germany is disarmed, but France must have a Franco-Anglo-American agreement to protect her from attack. French newspapers can demand the association in the same instrument of Italy and Belgium, and even discuss soberly the lightening for France of the burden of German occupation by establishing in the heart of Europe a black garrison from the

French colonies. The Austrian navy is dead, the Jugo-Slav navy not born, but Italy can be satisfied with nothing less than the strategic mastery of the Adriatic. Agreements for the reduction of fleets and armies are in the air, but Lord Jellicoe can recommend the expenditure of £20,000,000 a year on the provision of naval defence for Australia.

Between those ideals and the ideals of the League of Nations the world has to choose. The peril is that every country will shrink from the act of faith required of it, will preach, as it has preached in the past, the gospel of peace, and organise, as it has organised in the past, in preparation for war. To halt for ever between those two ideals will mean either paralysis or war, and of the two much more probably war. Full trust in the League there cannot be till the League has proved itself worthy of trust. But as soon as its active work begins, as and when the nations that signed the Covenant show themselves ready to make their pledge good, according to the League that practical support and that loyal confidence they have undertaken to accord, there will be mobilised behind the League of Nations a force capable of carrying to a peaceful solution even the intractable problems it will fall to it to attack.

It has been made a ground of criticism that the League of Nations will have no international army, nor even an international General Staff, to lend the sanction of force to its decisions. The

objection is reasonable, though it involves thrusting into undue prominence what if hopes are fulfilled should be anything but a primary function of the League. The League's first duty will be not to wage, nor even to suppress wars, but to take away the occasion of wars. Its ultimate, and at the same time its immediate, task will be to bring to light a world-purpose, as opposed to merely national purposes, and concentrate the motive power of the world behind it; not to submerge, or even to subordinate, national traits, but to make them distinctive instead of divisive; to foster every form of international co-operation and to break down all barriers, whether political or racial or economic, to the free intercourse of nations.

Above all, in relation to the present treaties, the task of the League will to suggest, and in the last resort to enforce, such changes and readjustments as more mature study of the situation, the gradual evaporation of war-prejudice, or the emergence of new factors in the political or economic field, may dictate. It is manifest, for example, that the succession of customs barriers raised by the series of states now occupying the area between the Adriatic and the Black Sea, must at the same time hinder trade and promote international friction. It may be that a satisfactory arrangement will be effected by the states themselves, whether along the lines of a Danubian federation or not, but it is certain that in initiating or co-operating in such a change the League of

Nations would make effectively for the general welfare of all the nations concerned.

By Article XI. of the Covenant—declaring it to be "the friendly right of each member of the League to bring to the attention of the Assembly or of the Council any circumstance whatever affecting international relations which threatens to disturb international peace or the good understanding between nations on which peace depends"—the League is given a *locus standi* which confers on it wide powers of judicious intervention without any suggestion of trespassing beyond its sphere.

It has been said that the League may have in certain contingencies to support its decisions by force. But it would be a complete mistake to assume that that means of necessity armed force. Unless the League is to fall fatally short of the hopes of its first architects its sanctions will be less and less military and more and more economic. The threat of blockade against a recalcitrant power promises to be hardly less potent than a declaration of war. Since 1917 the world has had a new vision, and Germany a new and shattering experience, of what a blockade can mean. I was told by Lord Robert Cecil, who as former Minister of Blockade could speak with unique authority, that during the last twelve months of the war the blockade of Germany was carried on practically without the active intervention of the navy at all. The navy, he was careful to explain, was always there, keeping the seas

in all weathers, scrutinising, catechising, checking, making every assurance doubly sure. But when once America was in the war every step necessary to make the blockade of Central Europe watertight was taken on the mainland of the United States or South America. The master of every vessel declared his cargo and his destination and gave all undertakings required, knowing well that if he departed from his pledges he would never run another voyage while the war lasted. Under the League of Nations those safeguards would be materially easier to impose, for in a League of Nations blockade there would be no neutrals. All the world would concentrate for so long as need be on ostracising the nation that set itself against the common will of the world.

It may be objected that after the experience of this war the blockade must be regarded as too barbarous a weapon for civilised nations to use. That argument is not really valid. In the first place, it took months or years for the blockade to reduce Germany to physical distress, and it is reasonable to anticipate that in a League blockade the spectacle of the rest of the world carrying on its commercial pursuits would act as an effective suasion to the nation blockaded long before any question of physical suffering had begun to arise. But there is a more decisive consideration than that. One of the greatest assets of the League of Nations would be the accurate information its statistical and economic sections would possess on the actual and potential resources of

any individual country. It would be a perfectly simple matter to allocate to any blockaded nation a bare subsistence ration, and no more than a subsistence ration, without seriously impairing the pressure loss of trade and the breach of all communications and external intercourse would effect.

But the economic power of the League of Nations promises to figure far more largely in promoting the welfare than in repressing the ambitions or obduracies of nations. Something of what a world organisation for the purchase and distribution of necessities, and the consequent stabilisation of price and supply, can effect has been seen in the operations of the Supreme Economic Council in the later months of the armistice period. That Council has developed from an Allied into an International body, and it is inevitable that it should become rapidly, if not immediately, an integral part of the League of Nations. The field is already more than ripe for its labours. The outstanding feature of the European situation to-day is famine. That is the direct outcome of war and blockade, but it may be years before the situation is normal. There is too much truth in the representations of Count Brockdorff-Rantzau to M. Clemenceau, and of Dr. Renner at St. Germain, to justify the hope of any return to conditions of sufficiency in Germany and Austria. That is as true of coal and other raw materials as of the prime necessity of corn. Unless the world as a whole is content to stand by and

see part of the world die—as it is showing to its credit to-day that it is not—some system of world regulation of supply and distribution must be instituted. The foundations of such a system have been laid. Plans for its development are in being. It will involve the association of the whole world in the League, but that is a condition likely soon to be fulfilled. A body that can regulate supply for the general welfare, and at the same time if necessity arise cut off supply altogether as a means of concerted pressure, should have small need to rely on purely military sanctions.

There is indeed one further objection to meet, but it hardly needs serious refutation. The League, it is suggested, controlled by the representatives of capitalist governments, may become an omnipotent engine of reaction. The answer to that criticism is clear. The League will be what the nations composing it make it. And the nations constituting the Council of the League with hardly an exception enjoy a thoroughly democratic franchise. If they choose to elect capitalists to represent them, whom have they but themselves to thank for what comes of it? Criticism of that order involves the assumption that it is the worst in the present that will determine the future. The League of Nations is built on the faith that it is out of the best of to-day that to-morrow will be shaped.

Appendix I

THE GERMAN TREATY

1.—THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

Covenant of League to be accepted in full.

2.—BOUNDARIES OF GERMANY.

German frontiers to be redrawn on lines required by cession of territory to France, Poland, Belgium, and (if so determined by plebiscite) to Denmark.

3.—THE NEW EUROPE.

(*a*) BELGIUM.

Small areas round Moresnet, Eupen, and Montmédy to be acquired from Germany, with right in two latter cases of protest to League of Nations. Treaties of 1839 to be abrogated.

(*b*) LUXEMBURG.

To be withdrawn from German Zollverein.

(*c*) LEFT BANK OF RHINE.

To be completely demilitarised.

(*d*) SAAR VALLEY.

Certain defined area, with mines therein contained, to be transferred to France in compensation for loss of coal supply from Northern France and in part payment of reparation under other heads. Government by Commission of five members, three appointed by League of Nations, one by inhabitants, and one by France. Population to declare by plebiscite after fifteen years in favour of union with Germany, union with France, or continuance of status quo. In event of union with Germany, mines to be repurchased by Germany from France.

(*e*) ALSACE-LORRAINE.

To be transferred wholesale to France free of war debts.

(*f*) GERMAN-AUSTRIA.

Complete independence to be recognised by Germany, as inalienable without consent of Council of League of Nations.

(*g*) CZECHO-SLOVAKIA.

Germany to recognise complete independence and to accept frontiers as they may subsequently be determined.

(*h*) POLAND.

Germany to cede most of Posen, and West Prussia. Future of Upper Silesia to be determined by plebiscite.

(*j*) EAST PRUSSIA.

To be severed from rest of Germany. Southern and eastern frontiers to be fixed by plebiscite. Reciprocal freedom of communication to north and south for Poles across German territory, and to east and west for Germans across Polish territory. District about Mendel to be ceded to Associated Powers for subsequent disposition.

(*k*) DANTZIG.

To be Free City under guarantee of League of Nations within Polish Customs Union.

(*l*) DENMARK.

Self-determination by plebiscite for Northern Schleswig and portions of Central Schleswig.

(*m*) HELIGOLAND.

To be defortified, and kept unfortified, by Germany.

(*n*) RUSSIA.

Germany to recognise full independence of all territories included in former Russian Empire, to accept annulment of Brest-Litovsk Treaty and other agreements concluded since November, 1917, and to admit right of Russia to restitution and reparation on principles embodied in present Treaty.

4.—EXTRA-EUROPEAN TERRITORIES.

(*a*) GENERAL.

Germany to renounce all rights in her own and her Allies' territories in favour of Associated Powers.

(*b*) CHINA.

Germany to renounce in favour of China all claim to further payments of Boxer Indemnity and all rights and concessions in Chinese territory other than Kiao-Chau.

(*c*) SHANTUNG.

Germany to renounce in favour of Japan all rights as to Kiao-Chau and as to mines, railroads, and cables in Shantung.

(*d*) SIAM, LIBERIA AND MOROCCO.

Germany to renounce all rights.

(*e*) EGYPT.

Germany to recognise British Protectorate declared in December, 1914.

(*f*) TURKEY AND BULGARIA.

Germany to accept decisions of Associated Powers with regard to all rights and property of her nationals in these countries.

5.—NAVAL, MILITARY AND AIR.

(*a*) GENERAL.

Germany to be disarmed in accordance with decisions already announced.

(*b*) MILITARY.

Army to be restricted by March, 1920, to 100,000 men recruited voluntarily on basis of twelve years' service. No General Staff. Production, type, and maintenance of armaments to conform to prescribed limitations. Belt of 50 kilometres on East Bank of Rhine to be demilitarised.

(*c*) NAVAL.

Navy to be limited to six battleships, six light cruisers, twelve destroyers, and twelve torpedo-boats, and personnel of 15,000, all volunteers. All other vessels to be surrendered. No submarines to be built. No fortifications in Baltic. Fourteen submarine cables to be surrendered.

(*d*) AIR.

No military aeroplanes or dirigibles to be retained or constructed. No aircraft of any kind to be manufactured for six months.

6.—PRISONERS OF WAR.

Repatriation to be carried out by Commission of representatives of Allies and of German Government.

7.—RESPONSIBILITIES.

(*a*) WILHELM II.

Kaiser's surrender to be requested from Dutch Government with a view to trial by Tribunal of five Judges, one from each of five Greater Allied Powers.

(*b*) OTHER OFFENDERS.

Persons accused of violation of laws and customs of war to be tried by special military tribunals.

8.—REPARATION AND RESTITUTION.

(*a*) MONEY PAYMENTS.

Germany to admit responsibility for all damage falling under ten specified heads, her total obligation being determined and notified not later than May 1, 1921, by an Inter-Allied Commission. Liquidation to extend over thirty years, and to be payable on account in instalments of

(1) £1,000,000,000 by May, 1921.
(2) £2,000,000,000 by 1926; and
(3) £2,000,000,000 after 1926.

Germany to issue at once Five per cent. Gold Bonds falling due in 1926, for the repayment of all sums borrowed by Belgium from her Allies up to the date of the armistice.

(*b*) SHIPPING.

Germany to cede to Allies all her merchant ships over 1,600 tons, half her ships between 1,600 and 1,000 tons, and one quarter of her trawlers and other fishing vessels, and further, to build ships for Allies to amount of 200,000 tons a year for five years.

(*c*) COAL, ETC.

Germany to make certain prescribed deliveries of coal, benzol, coal-tar, and sulphate of ammonia to France for a period of ten years, and to grant options of additional coal deliveries during the same period to France, Belgium, and Italy.

(*d*) BELGIAN ART TREASURES.

Germany to hand over manuscripts, early printed books, etc., to the equivalent of those destroyed in the Library of Louvain, and to restore certain other art treasures now in Berlin.

9.—FINANCE.

No part of Germany's pre-war debt to be charged against Alsace-Lorraine or Poland. In other cases Power to which German territory is ceded to bear due proportion of such debt. Germany to bear full cost of armies of occupation from date of armistice onwards.

10.—ECONOMIC.

No tariff discrimination against Allied trade for five years.

All Allied vessels to enjoy most-favoured-nation treatment for five years.

No unfair competition with Allied trade.

Clearing offices for dealing with pre-war debts to be established in Germany and all Allied countries.

Allies to have right to liquidate all German property within their territory.

11.—AERIAL NAVIGATION.

Allied aviators to have equal rights with German in respect of passage over and landing on German territory.

12.—PORTS, WATERWAYS AND RAILWAYS.

(*a*) FREEDOM OF TRANSIT.

Germany to grant unrestricted freedom of transit for Allied goods through German territory, and free zones in German ports to be maintained.

(*b*) INTERNATIONAL RIVERS.

Parts of Elbe, Oder, Niemen, and Danube to be internationalised.

(*c*) NEW CANAL SYSTEMS.

Germany to share, if required, in construction of Rhine-Danube and Rhine-Meuse Canals.

(*d*) KIEL CANAL.

To be open on terms of equality to warships and merchant vessels of all nationalities.

13.—LABOUR CONVENTION.

Provisions of Labour Convention to be accepted in full.

14.—GUARANTEES.

All German territory on left bank of Rhine, together with bridgeheads, to be occupied by Allies for fifteen years, being evacuated by stages as instalments of indemnity are paid off. In the event of Germany refusing, either during or after the fifteen years, to observe all or part of her obligations as to Reparation the whole or part of the areas scheduled to be re-occupied immediately.

15.—MISCELLANEOUS.

(*a*) VALIDITY OF TREATIES.

Germany to recognise the present Treaty and all subsequent agreements between her former Allies and the Associated Powers, and to recognise all new States and the frontiers assigned to them.

(*b*) RELIGIOUS MISSIONS.

Work of German missions in territory of Allied or Associated Powers to be continued under trustees appointed by those Powers.

16.—RATIFICATION.

Treaty to come into force, as between Powers that have ratified, on draft of a procès-verbal recording deposit of ratifications by Germany on the one hand and any three of the Principal Allied and Associated Powers on the other.

Appendix II

THE AUSTRIAN TREATY

1.—LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

Covenant of League to be accepted in full.

2.—BOUNDARIES OF AUSTRIA.

(*a*) Austrian Frontiers to be redrawn on lines necessitated by severance of Austria and Hungary, grant of independence to Czecho-Slovakia and the Serb-Croat-Slovene State, and cession of territory to Italy and to the Allied and Associated Powers.

(*b*) CZECHO-SLOVAKIA.

Austria to recognise full independence. Czecho-Slovakia to undertake to protect racial minorities.

(*c*) SERB-CROAT-SLOVENE STATE.

Austria to recognise full independence. Serb-Croat-Slovene State to undertake to protect racial minorities. Klagenfurt area to decide by plebiscite between Austria and Serb-Croat-Slovene State.

(*d*) POLAND.

Similar provisions as to recognition of independence and reciprocal protection of racial minorities.

(*e*) HUNGARY.

Similar provisions.

(*f*) RUSSIA.

Austria to accept complete annulment of Brest-Litovsk Treaty to recognise full independence of all territories formerly part of Russian Empire, and to admit right of Russia to reparation and restitution on basis of present Treaty.

(*g*) GALICIA.

To be transferred to Allies for subsequent disposal in accordance with plebiscite.

(*h*) ITALY.

Trentino, Southern Tyrol and Trieste Peninsula to be transferred to Italian sovereignty.

3.—PROTECTION OF MINORITIES.

General undertaking to be given covering legal and religious equality and freedom of language.

4.—NAVAL AND MILITARY.

Navy and Air Forces to disappear. Army limited to 30,000, all on voluntary enlistment.

5.—RESPONSIBILITIES.

Surrender of persons guilty of war-crimes required as in case of Germany.

6.—REPARATION.

Austria to make good damage to civilian person and property under certain specified categories. Allied Reparation Commission to assess payments to be made annually for thirty years from 1921, also payment to be made in money and material prior to 1921. All merchant shipping to be surrendered as contribution towards reparation.

7.—RESTITUTION.

All property, including cash, sequestrated by Austria to be restored where identifiable or where seizure can be proved. Artistic, scientific and historic collections previously the property of Crown or State to be inalienable for twenty years except by special arrangement.

8.—FINANCE.

Austrian public (pre-war) debt to be distributed, on basis approved by Reparation Commission, among new States to which former Austro-Hungarian territory is transferred. New States to assume possession of any property within their borders belonging to Austrian Crown or former Austro-Hungarian Government, making such payment on basis approved by Reparation Commission, such payment to rank as Austrian contribution towards reparation.

9.—PORTS, WATERWAYS AND RAILWAYS.

(*a*) Provisions follow substantially those of German Treaty.

(*b*) Austria to have unfettered access to Adriatic and to grant Czecho-Slovakia similar access over Austrian territory to Fiume and Trieste.

(*c*) Danube from Ulm to area of jurisdiction of Danube Commission to be internationalised. Austria to be deprived of representation on Danube Commission.

10.—LABOUR CONVENTION.

Provisions of Labour Convention to be accepted in full.

11.—RELATIONS WITH GERMANY.

No union with Germany to be effected without consent of Council of League of Nations.

COUNT BROCKDORFF-RANTZAU ON THE GERMAN TREATY.

Letter addressed to the President of the Peace Conference under date May 13th, 1919.

Sir,—In accordance with my note of May 9th, I beg to forward the following observations of the economic Commission charged with studying the effects of the proposed terms of peace on the condition of the population of Germany.

In the course of the last two generations, Germany has changed from an agricultural State to an industrial. The agricultural State could feed forty million men. As an industrial State Germany was capable of ensuring the support of sixty-seven millions. In 1913, imports of foodstuffs amounted to about 12,000,000 tons. Before the war, about 15,000,000 men in Germany were dependent directly or indirectly on foreign trade and the shipping industry, being employed on working up raw material from abroad.

According to the provisions of the Peace Treaty, Germany must surrender all her commercial shipping fit for overseas trade and all vessels newly completed. Moreover for the next five years her yards must be devoted in the first instance to construction for the Allies and Associated Governments. In addition Germany is to lose her colonies. The whole of her possessions are to fall into the hands of the Allied and Associated Governments, are to serve in part to meet the indemnity demands, are to be put into liquidation, and are to be submitted to whatever economic measures the Allies may see fit to impose in time of peace.

By the operation of the territorial clauses of the Peace Treaty an important part of the cereal and potato producing area in the east will be lost. That will mean the disappearance of twenty-one per cent. of Germany's home-grown supplies of these commodities. Our productivity in foodstuffs will undergo a further diminution. First of all the importation of certain raw materials for the German fertiliser industry will be restricted, and in addition that industry and others will be handicapped by coal shortage, for the Peace Treaty provides that we must lose almost a third of our coal output, while huge deliveries of coal are imposed on us for the next ten years. More than that, according to the Peace Treaty, Germany must cede to her neighbours almost three-fourths of her steel output, and more than three-fifths of her zinc output.

After such a limitation of her own output, after this economic handicap resulting from the loss of coal, of her merchant shipping and of her overseas possessions Germany will no longer be in a position to obtain adequate raw materials from abroad. At the same time her need for food imports will have sensibly increased. As a consequence Germany will soon find herself incapable of providing work and food for the millions who live on imported goods and commerce. These millions must then emigrate from Germany. But that is technically impossible, for many of the important States of the world will take definite steps to prohibit German immigration. More than that, hundreds of thousands of Germans hailing from countries at war with Germany or from the districts to be ceded will pour into Germany. If the terms of peace are carried out it means literally condemning millions of people in Germany to death, and that so much the more swiftly in that the health of the people has been completely undermined by the blockade, which was actually sharpened during the armistice period.

No relief enterprise, on whatever scale and however permanent, will be capable of setting a term to this sacrifice. Peace will require of the German people more than four-and-a-half years of war in human sacrifice (a million-and-a-quarter killed in battle and more than a million victims of the blockade). We cannot but question whether the delegates of the Allied and Associated Allies have realised the consequences that must inevitably ensue if Germany, which is to-day thickly populated, united economically with the whole world, a prosperous industrial country, is reduced to a stage of development corresponding to its economic situation and population of half a century ago.

The man who signs the Peace Treaty will be pronouncing the death sentence of millions of men, women and children of Germany.

Before submitting other details, I deem it my duty to lay before the delegations of the Allied and Associated countries these considerations in regard to the effect of the Peace Treaty on the problem of German population. If it is desired statistical proofs can be supplied.

I am, Sir, etc.,

Appendix IV

GENERAL SMUTS ON THE GERMAN TREATY

I have signed the Peace Treaty, not because I consider it a satisfactory document, but because it is imperatively necessary to close the war; because the world needs peace above all, and nothing could be more fatal than the continuance of the state of suspense between war and peace. The months since the armistice was signed have perhaps been as upsetting, unsettling, and ruinous to Europe as the previous four years of war. I look upon the Peace Treaty as the close of those two chapters of war and armistice, and only on that ground do I agree to it.

I say this now, not in criticism, but in faith; not because I wish to find fault with the work done, but rather because I feel that in the Treaty we have not yet achieved the real peace to which our peoples were looking, and because I feel that the real work of making peace will only begin after this Treaty has been signed, and a definite halt has thereby been called to the destructive passions that have been desolating Europe for nearly five years. This Treaty is simply the liquidation of the war situation in the world.

The promise of the new life, the victory of the great human ideals, for which the peoples have shed their blood and their treasure without stint, the fulfilment of their aspirations towards a new international order and a fairer, better world are not written in this Treaty, and will not be written in treaties. "Not in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, but in spirit and in truth," as the Great Master said, must the foundations of the new order be laid. A new heart must be given, not only to our enemies, but also to us; a contrite spirit for the woes which have overwhelmed the world: a spirit of pity, mercy, and forgiveness for the sins and wrongs which we have suffered. A new spirit of generosity and humanity, born in the hearts of the peoples in this great hour of common suffering and sorrow, can alone heal the wounds which have been inflicted on the body of Christendom.

And this new spirit among the peoples will be the solvent for the problems which the statesmen have found too hard at the Conference.

There are territorial settlements which will need revision. There are guarantees laid down, which we all hope will soon be found out of harmony with the new peaceful temper and

unarmed state of our former enemies. There are punishments fore-shadowed, over most of which a calmer mood may yet prefer to pass the sponge of oblivion. There are indemnities stipulated, which cannot be exacted without grave injury to the industrial revival of Europe, and which it will be in the interests of all to render more tolerable and moderate.

There are numerous pin-pricks, which will cease to pain under the healing influences of the new international atmosphere. The real peace of the peoples ought to follow, complete, and amend the peace of the statesmen.

In this Treaty, however, two achievements of far-reaching importance for the world are definitely recorded. The one is the destruction of Prussian militarism, the other is the institution of the League of Nations. I am confident the League of Nations will yet prove the path of escape for Europe out of the ruin brought about by this war.

But the League is as yet only a form. It still requires the quickening life, which can only come from the active interest and the vitalising contact of the peoples themselves. The new creative spirit, which is once more moving among the peoples in their anguish, must fill the institution with life and with inspiration for the pacific ideals born of this war, and so convert it into a real instrument of progress. In that way the abolition of militarism, in this Treaty unfortunately confined to the enemy, may soon come as a blessing and relief to the Allied peoples as well.

And the enemy peoples should at the earliest possible date join the League, and in collaboration with the Allied peoples learn to practise the great lesson of this war—that not in separate ambitions or in selfish domination but in common service for the great human causes lies the true path of national progress.

This joint collaboration is especially necessary to-day for the reconstruction of a ruined and broken world. The war has resulted not only in the utter defeat of the enemy armies, but has gone immeasurably further. We witness the collapse of the whole political and economic fabric of Central and Eastern Europe. Unemployment, starvation, anarchy, war, disease, and despair stalk through the land.

Unless the victors can effectively extend a helping hand to the defeated and broken peoples, a large part of Europe is threatened with exhaustion and decay. Russia has already walked into the night, and the risk that the rest may follow is very grave indeed. The effects of this disaster would not be

confined to Central and Eastern Europe. For civilisation is one body, and we are all members of one another.

A supreme necessity is laid on all to grapple with this situation. And in the joint work of beneficence the old feuds will tend to be forgotten, the roots of reconciliation among the peoples will begin to grow again, and ultimately flower into active, fruitful, lasting peace.

To the peoples of the United States and the British Empire, who have been exceptionally blessed with the good things of life, I would make a special appeal. Let them exert themselves to the utmost in this great work of saving the wreckage of life and industry on the Continent of Europe. They have a great mission, and in fulfilling it they will be as much blessed as blessing.

All this is possible, and I hope capable, of accomplishment; but only on two conditions. In the first place, the Germans must convince our peoples of their good faith, of their complete sincerity through a real honest effort to fulfil their obligations under the Treaty to the extent of their ability. They will find the British people disposed to meet them half-way in their unexampled difficulties and perplexities. But any resort to subterfuges or to underhand means to defeat or evade the Peace Treaty will only revive old suspicions and arouse anger and prove fatal to a good understanding.

And, in the second place, our Allied peoples must remember that God gave them overwhelming victory—victory far beyond their greatest dreams, not for small selfish ends, not for financial or economic advantages, but for the attainment of the great human ideals, for which our heroes gave their lives, and which are the real victors in this war of ideals.

Appendix V

THE COVENANT OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

The High Contracting Parties,

In order to promote international co-operation and to achieve international peace and security

by the acceptance of obligations not to resort to war,

by the prescription of open, just and honourable relations between nations,

by the firm establishment of the understandings of international law as the actual rule of conduct among Governments, and

by the maintenance of justice and a scrupulous respect for all treaty obligations in the dealings of organised peoples with one another,

Agree to this Covenant of the League of Nations.

ARTICLE 1.

The original Members of the League of Nations shall be those of the Signatories which are named in the Annex to this Covenant and also such of those other States named in the Annex as shall accede without reservation to this Covenant. Such accession shall be effected by a Declaration deposited with the Secretariat within two months of the coming into force of the Covenant. Notice thereof shall be sent to all other members of the League.

Any fully self-governing State, Dominion, or Colony not named in the Annex may become a Member of the League if its

admission is agreed to by two-thirds of the Assembly, provided that it shall give effective guarantees of its sincere intention to observe its international obligations, and shall accept such regulations as may be prescribed by the League in regard to its military, naval and air forces and armaments.

Any Member of the League may, after two years' notice of its intention so to do, withdraw from the League, provided that all its international obligations and all its obligations under this Covenant shall have been fulfilled at the time of its withdrawal.

ARTICLE 2.

The action of the League under this Covenant shall be effected through the instrumentality of an Assembly and of a Council with a permanent Secretariat.

ARTICLE 3.

The Assembly shall consist of Representatives of the Members of the League.

The Assembly shall meet at stated intervals and from time to time as occasion may require at the Seat of the League or at such other place as may be decided upon.

The Assembly may deal at its meetings with any matter within the sphere of action of the League or affecting the peace of the world.

At meetings of the Assembly each Member of the League shall have one vote, and may not have more than three Representatives.

ARTICLE 4.

The Council shall consist of Representatives of the Principal Allied and Associated Powers, together with Representatives of four other Members of the League. These four Members of the League shall be selected by the Assembly from time to time in its discretion. Until the appointment of the Representatives of the four Members of the League first selected by the Assembly, Representatives of Belgium, Brazil, Spain and Greece, shall be members of the Council.

With the approval of the majority of the Assembly, the Council may name additional Members of the League whose Representatives shall always be Members of the Council; the Council, with like approval, may increase the number of Members of the League to be selected by the Assembly for representation on the Council.

The Council shall meet from time to time, as occasion may require, and at least once a year, at the Seat of the League, or at such other place as may be decided upon. The Council may deal at its meetings with any matter within the sphere of action of the League, or affecting the peace of the world.

Any Member of the League not represented on the Council shall be invited to send a Representative to sit as a member at any meeting of the Council during the consideration of matters specially affecting the interests of that Member of the League.

At meetings of the Council, each Member of the League represented on the Council shall have one vote, and may not have more than one Representative.

ARTICLE 5.

Except where otherwise expressly provided in this Covenant. or by the terms of the present Treaty, decisions at any meeting of the Assembly or of the Council shall require the agreement of all the Members of the League represented at the meeting.

All matters of procedure at meetings of the Assembly or of the Council, including the appointment of Committees to investigate particular matters, shall be regulated by the Assembly or by the Council, and may be decided by a majority of the Members of the League represented at the meeting.

The first meeting of the Assembly and the first meeting of the Council shall be summoned by the President of the United States of America.

ARTICLE 6.

The permanent Secretariat shall be established at the Seat of the League. The Secretariat shall comprise a Secretary-General and such secretaries and staff as may be required.

The first Secretary-General shall be the person named in the Annex; thereafter the Secretary-General shall be appointed by the Council with the approval of the majority of the Assembly.

The Secretaries and staff of the Secretariat shall be appointed by the Secretary-General with the approval of the Council.

The Secretary-General shall act in that capacity at all meetings of the Assembly and of the Council.

The expenses of the Secretariat shall be borne by the Members of the League in accordance with the apportionment of the expenses of the International Bureau of the Universal Postal Union.

ARTICLE 7.

The Seat of the League is established at Geneva.

The Council may at any time decide that the Seat of the League shall be established elsewhere.

All positions under or connected with the League, including the Secretariat, shall be open equally to men and women.

Representatives of the Members of the League and officials of the League, when engaged on the business of the League shall enjoy diplomatic privileges and immunities.

The buildings and other property occupied by the League or its officials, or by Representatives attending its meetings, shall be inviolable.

ARTICLE 8.

The Members of the League recognise that the maintenance of peace requires the reduction of national armaments to the lowest point consistent with national safety and the enforcement by common action of international obligations.

The Council, taking account of the geographical situation and circumstances of each State, shall formulate plans for such reduction for the consideration and action of the several Governments.

Such plans shall be subject to reconsideration and revision at least every ten years.

After these plans shall have been adopted by the several Governments, the limits of armaments therein fixed shall not be exceeded without the concurrence of the Council.

The Members of the League agree that the manufacture by private enterprise of munitions and implements of war is open to grave objections. The Council shall advise how the evil effects attendant upon such manufacture can be prevented, due regard being had to the necessities of those Members of the League which are not able to manufacture the munitions and implements of war necessary for their safety.

The Members of the League undertake to interchange full and frank information as to the scale of their armaments, their military, naval and air programmes, and the condition of such of their industries as are adaptable to warlike purposes.

ARTICLE 9.

A permanent Commission shall be constituted to advise the Council on the execution of the provisions of Articles I. and VIII., and on military, naval and air questions generally.

ARTICLE 10.

The Members of the League undertake to respect and preserve as against external aggression the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all Members of the League. In case of any such aggression, or in case of any threat or danger of such aggression, the Council shall advise upon the means by which this obligation shall be fulfilled.

ARTICLE 11.

Any war, or threat of war, whether immediately affecting any of the Members of the League or not, is hereby declared a matter of concern to the whole League, and the League shall take any action that may be deemed wise and effectual to safeguard the peace of nations. In case any such emergency should arise, the Secretary-General shall, on the request of any Member of the League, forthwith summon a meeting of the Council.

It is also declared to be the friendly right of each Member of the League to bring to the attention of the Assembly or of the Council any circumstance whatever affecting international relations which threatens to disturb international peace or the good understanding between nations upon which peace depends.

ARTICLE 12.

The Members of the League agree that if there should arise between them any dispute likely to lead to a rupture, they will submit the matter either to arbitration or to inquiry by the Council, and they agree in no case to resort to war until three months after the award by the arbitrators or the report by the Council.

In any case under this Article, the award of the arbitrators shall be made within a reasonable time, and the report of the Council shall be made within six months after the submission of the dispute.

ARTICLE 13.

The Members of the League agree that whenever any dispute shall arise between them which they recognise to be suitable for submission to arbitration, and which cannot be satisfactorily settled by diplomacy, they will submit the whole subject matter to arbitration.

Disputes as to the interpretation of a treaty, as to any question of international law, as to the existence of any fact which, if established, would constitute a breach of any international obligation, or as to the extent and nature of the reparation to be made for any such breach, are declared to be among those which are generally suitable for submission to arbitration.

For the consideration of any such dispute the Court of arbitration to which the case is referred shall be the Court agreed on by the parties to the dispute, or stipulated in any convention existing between them.

The Members of the League agree that they will carry out in full good faith any award that may be rendered, and that they will not resort to war against a Member of the League which complies therewith. In the event of any failure to carry

out such an award the Council shall propose what steps should be taken to give effect thereto.

ARTICLE 14.

The Council shall formulate and submit to the Members of the League for adoption plans for the establishment of a Permanent Court of International Justice. The Court shall be competent to hear and determine any dispute of au International character which the parties thereto submit to it. The Court may also give an advisory opinion upon any dispute or question referred to it by the Council or by the Assembly.

ARTICLE 15.

If there should arise between Members of the League any dispute likely to lead to a rupture, which is not submitted to arbitration in accordance with Article 13, the Members of the League agree that they will submit the matter to the Council. Any party to the dispute may effect such submission by giving notice of the existence of the dispute to the Secretary-General, who will make all necessary arrangements for a full investigation and consideration thereof.

For this purpose the parties to the dispute will communicate to the Secretary-General, as promptly as possible, statements of their case with all the relevant facts and papers, and the Council may forthwith direct the publication thereof.

The Council shall endeavour to effect a settlement of the dispute, and if such efforts are successful, a statement shall be made public giving such facts and explanations regarding the dispute and the terms of settlement thereof as the Council may deem appropriate.

If the dispute is not thus settled, the Council, either unanimously or by a majority vote, shall make and publish a report containing a statement of the facts of the dispute, and the recommendations which are deemed just and proper in regard thereto.

Any Member of the League represented on the Council may make public a statement of the facts of the dispute and of its conclusions regarding the same.

If a report by the Council is unanimously agreed to by the members thereof other than the Representatives of one or more of the parties to the dispute, the Members of the League agree that they will not go to war with any party to the dispute which complies with the recommendations of the report.

If the Council fails to reach a report which is unanimously agreed to by the members thereof, other than the Representatives of one or more of the parties to the dispute, the Members of the League reserve to themselves the right to take such action as they shall consider necessary for the maintenance of right and justice.

If the dispute between the parties is claimed by one of them, and is found by the Council to arise out of a matter which by international law is solely within the domestic jurisdiction of that party, the council shall so report, and shall make no recommendation as to its settlement.

The Council may in any case under this Article refer the dispute to the Assembly. The dispute shall be so referred at the request of either party to the dispute, provided that such request be made within fourteen days after the submission of the dispute to the Council.

In any case referred to the Assembly, all the provisions of this Article and of Article 12 relating to the action and powers of the Council, shall apply to the action and powers of the Assembly, provided that a report made by the Assembly, if concurred in by the Representatives of those Members of the League represented on the Council and of a majority of the other Members of the League, exclusive in each case of the Representatives of the parties to the dispute, shall have the same force as a report by the Council concurred in by all the members thereof other than the Representatives of one or more of the parties to the dispute.

ARTICLE 16.

Should any Member of the League resort to war in disregard of its covenants under Articles 12, 13, or 15, it shall *ipso facto* be deemed to have committed an act of war against all other Members of the League, which hereby undertake immediately to subject it to the severance of all trade or financial relations, the prohibition of all intercourse between their nationals and

the nationals of the covenant-breaking State, and the prevention of all financial, commercial, or personal intercourse between the nationals of the covenant-breaking State and the nationals of any other State, whether a Member of the League or not.

It shall be the duty of the Council in such case to recommend to the several Governments concerned what effective military, naval or air force the Members of the League shall severally contribute to the armed forces to be used to protect the covenants of the League.

The Members of the League agree, further, that they will mutually support one another in the financial and economic measures which are taken under this Article, in order to minimise the loss and inconvenience resulting from the above measures, and that they will mutually support one another in resisting any special measures aimed at one of their number by the covenant-breaking State, and that they will take the necessary steps to afford passage through their territory to the forces of any of the Members of the League which are co-operating to protect the covenants of the League.

Any Member of the League which has violated any covenant of the League may be declared to be no longer a Member of the League by a vote of the Council concurred in by the Representatives of all the other Members of the League represented thereon.

ARTICLE 17.

In the event of a dispute between a Member of the League and a State which is not a Member of the League, or between States not Members of the League, the State or States not Members of the League shall be invited to accept the obligations of membership in the League for the purposes of such dispute, upon such conditions as the Council may deem just. If such invitation is accepted, the provisions of Articles 12 to 16 inclusive shall be applied with such modification as may be deemed necessary by the Council.

Upon such invitation being given the Council shall immediately institute an inquiry into the circumstances of the dispute,

and recommend such action as may seem best and most effectual in the circumstances.

If a State so invited shall refuse to accept the obligations of membership in the League for the purposes of such dispute, and shall resort to war against a Member of the League, the provisions of Article 16 shall be applicable as against the State taking such action.

If both parties to the dispute when so invited refuse to accept the obligations of membership in the League for the purposes of such dispute, the Council may take such measures and make such recommendations as will prevent hostilities and will result in the settlement of the dispute.

ARTICLE 18.

Every treaty or international engagement entered into hereafter by any Member of the League shall be forthwith registered with the Secretariat and shall as soon as possible be published by it. No such treaty or international engagement shall be binding until so registered.

ARTICLE 19.

The Assembly may from time to time advise the reconsideration by Members of the League of treaties which have become inapplicable and the consideration of international conditions whose continuance might endanger the peace of the world.

ARTICLE 20.

The Members of the League severally agree that this Covenant is accepted as abrogating all obligations or understandings *inter se* which are inconsistent with the terms thereof, and solemnly undertake that they will not thereafter enter into any engagements inconsistent with the terms thereof.

In case any Member of the League shall, before becoming a Member of the League, have undertaken any obligations inconsistent with the terms of this Covenant, it shall be the duty of such Member to take immediate steps to procure its release from such obligations.

ARTICLE 21.

Nothing in this Covenant shall be deemed to affect the validity of international engagements, such as treaties of arbitration or regional understandings like the Monroe doctrine, for securing the maintenance of peace.

ARTICLE 22.

To those colonies and territories which as a consequence of the late war have ceased to be under the sovereignty of the States which formerly governed them and which are inhabited by peoples not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world, there should be applied the principle that the well-being and development of such peoples form a sacred trust of civilisation and that securities for the performance of this trust should be embodied in this Covenant.

The best method of giving practical effect to this principle is that the tutelage of such peoples should be entrusted to advanced nations who, by reason of their resources, their experience of their geographical position, can best undertake this responsibility, and who are willing to accept it, and that this tutelage should be exercised by them as Mandatories on behalf of the League.

The character of the mandate must differ according to the state of the development of the people, the geographical situation of the territory, its economic conditions and other similar circumstances.

Certain communities formerly belonging to the Turkish Empire have reached a stage of development where their existence as independent nations can be provisionally recognised subject to the rendering of administrative advice and assistance by a Mandatory until such time as they are able to stand alone. The wishes of these communities must be a principal consideration in the selection of the Mandatory.

Other people, especially those of Central Africa, are at such a stage that the Mandatory must be responsible for the administration of the territory under conditions which will guarantee freedom of conscience and religion subject only to the maintenance of public order and morals, the prohibition of abuses such as the slave trade, the arms traffic, and the liquor traffic, and the prevention of the establishment of fortifications or mili-

tary and naval bases and of military training of the natives for other than police purposes and the defence of territory, and will also secure equal opportunities for the trade and commerce of other Members of the League.

There are territories, such as South-West Africa and certain of the South Pacific Islands, which, owing to the sparseness of their population, or their small size, or their remoteness from the centres of civilisation, or their geographical contiguity to the territory of the Mandatory, and other circumstances, can be best administered under the laws of the Mandatory as integral portions of its territory, subject to the safeguards above mentioned in the interests of the indigenous population.

In every case of mandate, the Mandatory shall render to the Council an annual report in reference to the territory committed to its charge.

The degree of authority, control, or administration to be exercised by the Mandatory shall, if not previously agreed upon by the Members of the League, be explicitly defined in each case by the Council.

A permanent Commission shall be constituted to receive and examine the annual reports of the Mandatories and to advise the Council on all matters relating to the observance of the mandates.

ARTICLE 23.

Subject to and in accordance with the provisions of international conventions existing or hereafter to be agreed upon, the Members of the League:

(*a*) will endeavour to secure and maintain fair and humane conditions of labour for men, women, and children, both in their own countries and in all countries to which their commercial and industrial relations extend, and for that purpose will establish and maintain the necessary international organisations;

(*b*) undertake to secure just treatment of the native inhabitants of territories under their control;

(*c*) will entrust the League with the general supervision over the execution of agreements with regard to the traffic in women and children, and the traffic in opium and other dangerous drugs;

(*d*) will entrust the League with the general supervision of the trade in arms and ammunition with the countries in which the control of this traffic is necessary to the common interest;

(*e*) will make provision to secure and maintain freedom of communications and of transit and equitable treatment for the commerce of all Members of the League. In this connection, the special necessities of the regions devastated during the war of 1914-1918 shall be borne in mind;

(*f*) will endeavour to take steps in matters of international concern for the prevention and control of disease.

ARTICLE 24.

There shall be placed under the direction of the League all international bureaux already established by general treaties if the parties to such treaties consent. All such international bureaux and all commissions for the regulation of matters of international interest hereafter constituted shall be placed under the direction of the League.

In all matters of international interest which are regulated by general conventions but which are not placed under the control of international bureaux or commissions, the Secretariat of the League shall, subject to the consent of the Council and if desired by the parties, collect and distribute all relevant information and shall render any other assistance which may be necessary or desirable.

The Council may include as part of the expenses of the Secretariat the expenses of any bureau or commission which is placed under the direction of the League.

ARTICLE 25.

The Members of the League agree to encourage and promote the establishment and co-operation of duly authorised voluntary national Red Cross organisations having as purposes the improvement of health, the prevention of disease, and the mitigation of suffering throughout the world.

ARTICLE 26.

Amendments to this Covenant will take effect when ratified by the Members of the League whose Representatives compose

the Council and by a majority of the Members of the League whose Representatives compose the Assembly.

No such amendment shall bind any member of the League which signifies its dissent therefrom, but in that case it shall cease to be a Member of the League.

ANNEX.

I.—ORIGINAL MEMBERS OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS. SIGNATORIES OF THE TREATY OF PEACE.

United States of America.
Belgium.
Bolivia.
Brazil.
British Empire.
Canada.
Australia.
South Africa.
New Zealand.
India.
China.
Cuba.
Ecuador.
France.
Greece.
Guatemala.
Haiti.
Hedjaz.
Honduras.
Italy.
Japan.
Liberia.
Nicaragua.
Panama.
Peru.
Poland.
Portugal.
Rumania.
Serb-Croat-Slovene State.
Siam.
Czecho-Slovakia.
Uruguay.

STATES INVITED TO ACCEDE TO THE COVENANT

Argentine Republic.
Chile.
Colombia.
Denmark.
Netherlands.
Norway.
Paraguay.
Persia.
Salvador.
Spain.
Sweden.
Switzerland.
Venezuela.

II.—FIRST SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

The Honourable Sir James Eric Drummond, K.C.M.G., C.B.

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